

# Early Christmas treat: 2010's total lunar eclipse

FILE - This five picture combination shows various stages of a total lunar eclipse over Baghdad, Iraq, between 1:30-2:30am local time on March 4, 2007. Weather permitting, skygazers in North and Central America and a

tiny sliver of South America will boast the best seats to this year's only total eclipse of the moon. The eclipse will happen tonight on the West Coast and during the wee hours Tuesday on the East Coast.

Western Europe will only see the start of the spectacle while western Asia will catch the tail end. Total eclipse begins at 11:41 p.m. PST Monday or 2:41 a.m. EST Tuesday. The totality phase — when the



moon is entirely inside Earth's shadow — will last a little over an hour.

(AP Photo/Marko Drobnjakovic)  
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**5** days left to Christmas

Happy Holidays



On The News Email: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) website: [www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com) Tel: 582-7800 Monday, December 20, 2010

## Stabbed U.S. tourist's body found near Jerusalem

AMY TEIBEL,  
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli police found the body of a female American tourist, with multiple stab wounds and her hands bound behind her back, in a forest outside Jerusalem on Sunday in what authorities believe was a politically-motivated attack by two Arab men.

A friend of the slain woman survived, despite being knifed several times, and said the assailants at one point carefully removed her Star of David necklace and then stabbed her in the place it had rested on her chest.

Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld identified the slain woman as Christine Logan. He said she was American and 40 years old but did not have her hometown. The friend, Kaye Susan Wilson, a naturalized Israeli citizen originally from Britain, has been hospitalized with light wounds, officials said.

With a massive manhunt under way for the assailants, Rosenfeld said "the main lead line is that the attack was nationalistic, but we haven't ruled out the possibility that it was criminal."

Continued on Page A13



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## ARUBA MEETS KINGDOM

Aruba's Minister of Justice Arthur Dowers in The Hague

Read Page A7

## Gays see repeal as a civil rights milestone

Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., center, with Sen. Joe Lieberman, I-Conn., left, and Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., speaks at a news conference about the 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' bill during an unusual Saturday session on Capitol Hill in Washington Saturday, Dec. 18, 2010. Repeal of the bill would mean that, for the first time in American history, gays would be openly accepted by the military.

(AP Photo/Alex Brandon)  
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# Holiday lights can mean more than meets the eye



A string of illuminated glass bulbs, hung for the holidays, may seem like no big deal, so common it's easy to pass them without really noticing. But we humans are simple beings who sometimes communicate best in the most basic ways. Lights on a cold, dark night can be a welcome, even heartwarming sight. And in gloomy economic times, or other trying circumstances, they can mean even more.

One study found that outdoor holiday displays can tell a lot about a neighborhood. Whether found in

wealthy or working-class areas, they represent a community's spirit or "social capital," even indicating how well neighbors care for one another, says David Sloan Wilson, a professor in Binghamton University's departments of biology and anthropology.

"One way that neighborhoods express their feelings of neighborliness is to decorate the house, not the inside but the outside," Wilson says. "It is an expression of goodwill, basically."

A simple gesture, yes but one that touches and comforts people, and brings them together.

Here are a few stories about the impact holiday lights can have, from a big city neighborhood that united to light its main street to a small town that came together to try to brighten the holiday for a dying boy. Sparkling Harlem

It was as if Scrooge had invaded New York's Harlem neighborhood. Or so residents implied.

Facing an impossibly tight budget, the board that oversees the neighborhood's main thoroughfare, 125th Street, made a difficult decision: It cut funding for holiday lights.

When residents saw their normally festive business district looking spiritless, they complained, loudly.

"It was a bad Christmas in the office," recalls Barbara Askins, president and CEO of the 125th Street Business Improvement District. The lack of holiday lights last December had riled residents more than any issue in recent memory.

This year, with the budget woes persisting, Askins had an idea. What if she and her staff could persuade the community to donate the \$60,000 needed to decorate the entire length of the street?

The "Harlem, Light It Up" campaign began this fall, with fundraising parties and even a song and music video.

Big donations came in from nearby Columbia University and the City College of New York.

Businesses, churches and community organizations pitched in. Residents gave what they could, the smallest amount \$10.

It added up quickly. And the lights many of them incorporated in new sparkling decorations of snowflakes and shooting stars were purchased and installed along the bustling street.

Earlier this month, on a bitterly cold night, hundreds of people filled a neighborhood plaza for the official lighting. They cheered. They drank cocoa and hot apple cider provided by local businesses.

It had all been worth it, Askins thought, smiling to herself. And the feeling was confirmed the next day when she received an e-mail from a longtime 125th Street resident who thanked her.

The street, the woman wrote, "feels like home now." Birds of a Feather

The retirees of Loon Lake Lane and surrounding streets in Lincoln, Calif., are a close flock.

After moving in six years ago, one neighbor handed out wooden cutouts of ducks that he'd made. People painted them and put them in their yards. Some had lights. Some included tiny ducks to represent their grandchildren.

By the time they finished, there were 99 ducks.

Imagine, then, what it's like during the holidays at this retirement village north of Sacramento.

There's a time each year when everyone lines the streets with "luminarias," small lanterns made with brown paper bags filled with a bit of sand and a tea light candle. And folks put out decorative deer then kid each other when a wind gust blows one over. But what neighbors have always liked are strings of lights.

Trouble was, rising utility bills were cramping the styles of these retirees until they noticed the solar panels going up at Tom Zurek's house two years ago. Before long, several in the flock followed. □

## Images of 2010, gobbled up by a nation of watchers

NEW YORK — There it was, gazed upon by millions in horror, anger and pure fascination: a grainy, sputtering image of the deep blue sea and its interloper the bubbling brown goo that was spewing into the water from the depths of the planet.

It was, of course, the "spillcam" the reverse periscope into the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico that was broadcast live to the world from May to July. For the first time, we could watch in real time as a huge natural disaster unfolded in a place that for most of human history had been beyond our view.

And why not? Because that is what we do in this Brave New World, this modern age of unprecedented and unsettling wonder:

We watch. In a nation riven by disagreements and political conflicts and niche markets and on-demand isolation, this unites us: Hungrily, aggressively, sometimes stupefyingly, we watch.

If you needed any more evidence that we've become a nation of watchers, look no further than 2010. From the spillcam to Snooki, from volcanic clouds to video ambushes, the spectacle that was the past year ensured that the image the weird, wonderful, horrifying, mesmerizing image reigned supreme.

And there was certainly no shortage of spectacle for the hundreds of millions of American eyes casting about for something to see.

We watched a Florida minister threaten to burn a Quran on the 9/11 anniversary, then watched him hopscotch across the country conducting interviews about whether he'd do it or not. When he didn't, we watched him go to New Jersey and collect a 2011 Hyundai Accent from a car dealer for his troubles.

We watched the daughter of a vice presidential candidate perform on a celebrity dancing show, and do well and when that made a guy in Wisconsin so angry that he shot out his television, well, we watched that, too. All the more buzz for her mother's reality show a new addition to a genre that has turned pretty much every human endeavor into a story to be gazed upon and



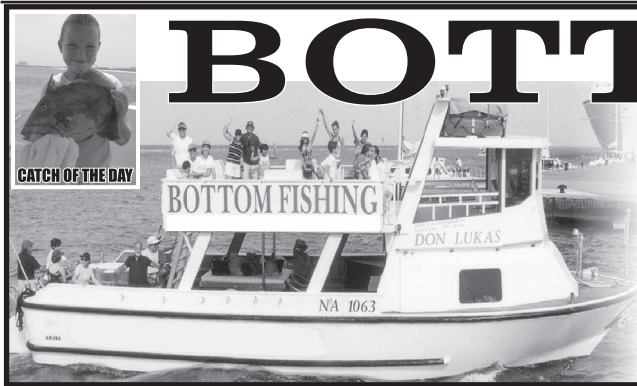
marveled at.

We watched a neighborhood explode in California. We watched a volcanic cloud spread across Europe, ground airplanes and strand thousands the primeval slapping back at the high-tech. We watched, live, as an earthquake ravaged Chile and, in slow motion, sent a possible tsunami rippling across the ocean toward Hawaii and Japan, and we breathed a collective sigh

of relief when the sound and fury signified very little.

We watched an unconventional pop star appear at an awards ceremony in a dress made of raw meat. We watched a fed-up flight attendant slide down a plane's emergency chute and into the national spotlight. We watched an advocacy group that transcends geography dump thousands of sensitive documents onto the media's doorstep. □





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## Students look to 2012 after immigration bill fails

LOS ANGELES – Emboldened by months of phone calls to lawmakers, hunger strikes and sit-ins, a group of college students and graduates in Los Angeles say they plan to take their fight for immigrant rights to the states and the 2012 election after Senate Republicans blocked a key piece of legislation.

But it won't be easy.

The Senate vote Saturday to toss the proposal that would have granted young illegal immigrants a route to legal status dealt a harsh blow to student activists who will face an even steeper uphill battle in the next Congress.

Immigrants see rough times ahead in the next two years, with many Republicans vowing to push for tougher immigration enforcement, but they also say Latino voters are getting fed up with lawmakers at a time when they are accruing greater political clout.

"This is a movement," said Nancy Meza, a 23-year-old illegal immigrant and college graduate who wore a University of California, Los Angeles sweatshirt as she watched the televised vote. "We don't have lobbyists and paid staff. It's a movement by students."

In the hours after the vote, Meza and about 50 other student activists who had gathered at the UCLA Downtown Labor Center said they would remind Latinos who stood by them and those who did not in the next election cycle. They will push for access to financial aid and drivers' licenses in states more friendly to immigrants like California.

Few said the legislation, many called the Dream Act, had a chance in the next two years with Republicans taking control of the House of Representatives and a shrinking Democratic majority in the Senate. But they said that wouldn't derail the networks they had set up across the country to support illegal immigrant students and help them reveal their status and learn to live unafraid.

Some at the UCLA center, including university student Leslie Perez, 22, wept as they watched the vote on a big screen.

Minutes after it was over, many donned jackets and umbrellas to take to the rainy streets of Los Angeles, chanting "undocumented and unafraid."

Republicans might consider some kind of measure to help the students, but it would probably be much narrower, said Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, which advocates stricter limits on immigration.

"This has a real demoralizing effect," Krikorian said of the student activists. "There's only so long you can keep up these hunger strikes and

all this political theater they've been engaging in, especially if there's no specific target."

Another challenge is students could wind up feeling excluded when they can't work after graduation, despite their political activism.

"It may alienate the group we most want to incorporate," said Louis DeSipio, a professor of political science at University of California, Irvine. Immigrant rights groups said they planned to turn up the pressure on the Obama administration to slow deportations, end local police enforcement of immigration laws and look out for the students, many of whom publicly revealed their immigration status over the last few months.

Students also said they planned to fight for immigrant benefits though it's not legalization locally as they've seen anti-illegal immigration activists do to pass tougher enforcement measures in states like Arizona.

"They're winning by state, they're winning by region," said Cyndi Bendezu, a 25-year-old University of California, Los Angeles graduate who was brought to the United States from Peru when she was 4 years old. "We have to win smaller victories."

Bendezu, who had been an illegal immigrant when she started college, attained legal residency through a relative's petition. Now, she said she can't wait to become a citizen to be able to vote. Students said Saturday that momentum they had gained in recent months was bigger than the legislative defeat.

The legislation would have provided a route to legal status for immigrants who were brought to the United States before age 16, have lived in the country for five years, graduated from high school or gained an equivalency degree and who joined the military or attend college.

It targeted the most sympathetic of the 10 million to 12 million illegal immigrants living in the United States those brought to the country as children, and who in many cases consider themselves American, speak English and have no ties to their native countries.

Critics of the bill called it a backdoor to amnesty that would encourage more foreigners to sneak into the United States in hopes of being legalized eventually.

The Mexican-born Meza said the vote makes it harder for her to finance graduate school to get a doctorate in education policy and become a professor.

But Meza, who came to the country when she was 2, said she'll find a way just as she did baby-sitting, tutoring and waiting tables to pay for college even though her degree now lies covered in dust in her living room, unused. □



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# Wanted: Buyer for controversial Cape Wind energy



BOSTON — Cape Wind has outlasted a decade of government review, a slew of court brawls and fierce opposition from mariners, fishermen, Indian tribes and Kennedys just to win the right to sell its wind-fueled electricity. Now, all it needs are customers.

Last month, the nation's first offshore wind farm nailed down its first buyer when the Massachusetts Department of Public Utility approved a deal that sees Cape Wind selling half its power to National Grid, the state's largest electric utility.

But the other half of the Cape Wind project's electricity remains available with no obvious takers, raising the possibility of a smaller project with pricier power.

The top prospect for Cape Wind is the state's second-largest electric utility, NStar. But NStar is uninterested and says it can find cheaper renewable power elsewhere. "It's not that we're for or against Cape Wind at all," said NStar spokeswoman Caroline Allen. "We just want to make sure that we are promoting renewables in the region ... but also being mindful of costs for our customers."

Price is always an issue with offshore wind, which costs more partly because it's expensive to build and maintain massive turbines at sea. The 468-megawatt Cape Wind, which is expected to produce enough power for 200,000 homes in average winds, is estimated to cost at least \$2 billion to construct. In its 15-year deal, National Grid agreed to pay 18.7 cents per kilowatt hour for Cape Wind power beginning in 2013, with a 3.5 percent annual increase. The starting price is twice what National Grid pays today for power from fossil fuels, and regulators say the contract will add about 1.7 percent to its residential customers' bills.

Though its price is higher, Cape Wind has big selling points, including a large generating capacity that's far greater, for instance, than Maine's 132-megawatt Kibby Mountain wind farm, the largest wind farm in New England. Also, Cape Wind's projected start date in late 2012 has it producing the green electricity needed to fill state renewable power mandates years before any other U.S. offshore project.

Without other takers, Cape Wind would almost certainly have to build fewer than its proposed 130 turbines, said wind energy analyst Mark Kaplan, an associate director at IHS Emerging Energy

Research. Developers won't be able to finance a project with more turbines than are needed to produce the power Cape Wind is contracted to sell, he said.

If Cape Wind sheds turbines, the price goes up per lost turbine, to a maximum 19.3 cents per kilowatt hour. Kaplan also questioned whether Cape Wind's search for a second customer has broad implications for offshore wind expansion. Just this month, developer Deepwater Wind announced plans for a 200-turbine, 1,000 megawatt project (1 gigawatt) off Rhode Island.

"If Cape Wind is having difficulties identifying a second buyer, who's going to buy a gigawatt of offshore wind?" Kaplan asked.

Deepwater has said the project's large size will help lower the price of its power, which they estimate will be in the "mid teens" in cents per kilowatt hour.

Sue Reid of the Conservation Law Foundation, a Cape Wind advocate, estimates Cape Wind has six months to a year to find new buyers or face the disappointing prospect of building a smaller project. But she's certain that buyers, including perhaps NStar, will want to be part of a new and badly needed clean energy industry.

"Really, are they going to choose to be on the wrong side

of history here?" she said.

Cape Wind spokesman Mark Rodgers declined to discuss the search for another buyer, saying only that the company was "pursuing all options."

Cape Wind has been assailed since it was proposed in 2001 as a threat to marine life and historic ocean views. The late Sen. Edward Kennedy called it a giveaway to a private developer, and two Wampanoag tribes said its Nantucket Sound location would ruin its ancient religious rituals.

This year, opponents promptly sued the Obama administration after it approved the project, saying it had cleared exhaustive review and was crucial to the nation's clean energy future.

In their Nov. 22 decision, state utility regulators wrote that Cape Wind's power price is "expensive" but cited numerous benefits that make Cape Wind "cost effective," including about 160 permanent jobs and a stable price that acts as a hedge against volatile fossil fuel prices.

Regulators also said regional utilities simply won't be able to meet requirements to increase renewable energy sources without Cape Wind and the offshore industry it will kick off. Massachusetts, for instance, requires companies to get 15 percent of their power from renewable sources by 2020. □

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# Gays see repeal as a civil rights milestone

NEW YORK – Allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military is a step toward equality, advocates say, but a fight for other social changes such as gay marriage still lies ahead.

The Senate voted Saturday to end the 17-year ban on openly gay troops, overturning the Clinton-era policy known as “don’t ask, don’t tell.”

“It’s one step in a very long process of becoming an equal rights citizen,” said Warren Arbury of Savannah, Ga., who served in the Army for seven years, including three combat tours, before being kicked out two years ago under the policy. He said he planned to re-enlist once the policy is abolished.

“Even though this is really huge, I look at it as a chink in a very, very long chain,” he added.

The ruling drew quick rebuke from foes of lifting the ban who argued that the military shouldn’t be used to expand the rights of gays and that allowing them to serve openly would hurt troop morale and a unit’s ability fight.

Supporters declared the vote a civil rights milestone.

Aaron Belkin, director of the California-based Palm Center a think tank on the issue said

the vote “ushers in a new era in which the largest employer in the United States treats gays and lesbians like human beings.”

For thousands of years, he said, one of the key markers for first-class citizenship in any nation is the right to serve in the military, and Saturday’s vote “is a historic step toward that.”

Repeal means that for the first time in U.S. history, gays will be openly accepted by the military and can acknowledge their sexual orientation without fear of being discharged. More than 13,500 service members have been dismissed under the 1993 law. Before that, they had been explicitly barred from military service since World War I.

The change won’t take immediate effect, however. The legislation says the president and his top military advisers must certify that lifting the ban won’t hurt troops’ fighting ability. After that, there’s a 60-day waiting period for the military.

Some supporters of the repeal traveled to Washington to witness the vote, including Sue Fulton, a former Army captain and company commander who is spokeswoman for Knights Out, a group of 92 gay and

lesbian West Point graduates who are out and no longer serving.

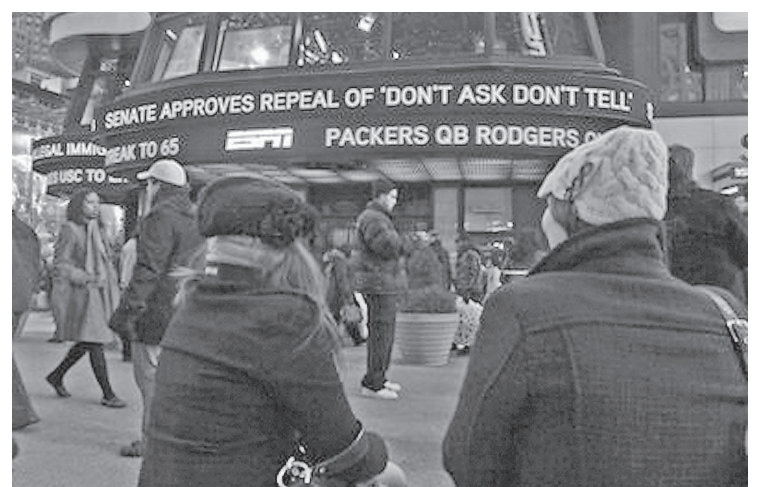
Driving home to North Plainfield, N.J., the 51-year-old Fortune 500 executive said she thinks the repeal will have an effect on the civil rights of gays in America.

“As more people realize that gay and lesbian citizens are risking their lives to defend this country, perhaps they’ll be more willing to acknowledge gays and lesbians as full citizens in other ways,” she said.

Conservative organizations said the vote didn’t reflect the sentiments of rank-and-file military members and should not have taken place so close to the end of the current session of Congress.

“The issue that really disturbs me more than anything else is that legislation that’s controversial tends to be done in lame-duck sessions when a number of the elected representatives are no longer accountable to the people,” said Len Deo, president of the New Jersey Family Policy Council.

The Massachusetts Family Institute blasted Senate Republicans, including Sen. Scott Brown, who broke rank with their party on the vote.



“(They) made a vow not to vote on ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’ until the budget was resolved and they broke trust with the people,” said the group’s president, Kris Mineau. “In doing so, they not only have put special interests above fiscal interests but also have put our troops at risk during wartime.”

In New York, home to one of the nation’s largest gay communities and a gay pride

parade whose grand marshal this year was an openly gay, discharged serviceman, 28-year-old Cassandra Melnikow glanced at a news ticker in Times Square announcing the repeal and said: “Excellent! It’s about time.” “I don’t see what difference (sexual orientation) makes in the fighting military,” said Melnikow, a public health researcher. “What’s the big deal?” □

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# Young wife, mother of 2 killed by a simple pothole



HEFLIN, Ala. — His wife riding beside him with their two children in safety seats in the back, John Fisher drove home toward South Carolina along a stretch of Interstate 20 covered with ruts, bumps and crumbling concrete.

Just ahead of the family, Crystal Marie Dick was heading to the other side of the Georgia line to give a friend a ride.

The pothole in front of her 1995 Toyota Camry had been fixed at least once already, and now the repair was breaking down, too. A pocket of jagged, brittle bits of concrete covered nearly half of the right lane, the slow lane.

Her Camry hit the hole, kicking a chunk into the air as the Fishers' green Ford pickup hurtled forward at 70 mph.

The glass directly in front of

Fisher's wife exploded.

No one knows exactly how big the fragment was, but it blew a hole the size of a football through the windshield. It struck Jo Maureen Fisher in the head, sailed between her preschoolers, hit the rear window and shattered it too, flying out of the truck's cab never to be found.

Wounded in the most random of ways, John Fisher's 33-year-old wife died the next day. Today, he is a single dad trying to balance work with child care and all the things she used to do.

Back in Alabama, Dick is trying to go on with life too. It's not easy when you're a young mother and your only transportation is that old blue Camry, the one that still carries awful memories and a busted rear end from hitting a

pothole at highway speed.

Dick knows she wasn't at fault troopers decided no one was yet she still is haunted by the accident.

"People told me, 'You're the one who killed that lady?' It hurts," the 23-year-old said. "I wasn't doing anything wrong. I wasn't texting. I wasn't talking on the phone. I wasn't speeding. I wasn't doing anything but driving."

Using federal studies, the Washington-based transportation safety advocacy group TRIP estimates the United States could save 145 lives over a decade for every \$100 million spent on a variety of road safety improvements and maintenance.

The cost is high.

So is the price of letting just one pothole turn into a killer.

Jo Maureen Cavanaugh and John Fisher went on their first date in January 2000, the year after she graduated from Elon University in North Carolina. They ate at an Applebee's and were engaged a few months later.

A cousin of hers was getting married in New Orleans last March, so the family packed up their Ford F-150 for the 13-hour drive across five states. The ceremony finished, they headed back toward Goose Creek, S.C., near Charleston.

There are a few different ways

to drive from New Orleans to Charleston; the Fishers chose I-20, which crosses Alabama from Mississippi before leading into Georgia and South Carolina.

On the morning of March 15, the family drove eastward out of Birmingham into construction zones that have slowed traffic for years. They crossed Lake Logan Martin, passed the Talladega Superspeedway and went through Oxford, the last city of any size before the Georgia line. Only a few miles before the interstate smooths out in Georgia, John Fisher came upon a section so riddled with pits and patches that drivers turn up the radio to drown out the roar of the road.

The 210 milepost was just ahead. More than 33,000 vehicles pass it daily on average.

Dick, who had asked her boyfriend to watch her four sons while she made the 40-minute drive to Carrollton, Ga., to pick up her friend, took the entrance ramp to I-20 east and found herself in the right-hand lane, behind a slow truck.

It's not clear how long the Fisher family was behind her, or how far back they were.

Dick checked her rearview mirror and swiveled her head to check the Camry's blind

spot, then began easing into the lane on her left.

"Just when I went to pull out it went 'boom!'" Dick said. "I didn't know if my motor had fallen out or what."

An investigation by Alabama state troopers determined Dick's right rear wheel struck the pothole. She said she never had a chance to avoid the rocky depression, and couldn't have stopped in time either. Troopers didn't issue any tickets.

Photos released by the Alabama Department of Transportation under an open records request filed by The Associated Press show the hole had been patched at least once before the accident. The new concrete was a different color than the older road and it too was crumbling, like the aged pavement around it. The department doesn't know how long the pothole had been there. Shocked by what sounded like a cannon going off behind her, Dick looked in her mirrors and saw Fisher's green pickup swerving all over. She also knew right away that something was seriously wrong with her car and pulled to the right into the emergency lane. Fisher pulled in right behind her, panicked. "He got out and was waving his arms, like he was trying to get help," she said. □



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## Valero Plans Aruba LNG Project

ORANJESTAD - Officials with the Valero Aruba Refinery and the Government of Aruba announced last week that they had signed a memorandum of understanding addressing the delivery of liquefied natural gas to Aruba, which will help reduce utility costs and lower emissions on the island.

At the time of the signing, Valero executives also announced that the Valero Aruba Refinery has completed a plantwide program to get refinery units ready to restart, and that the restart process will begin within the next several days.

Both announcements represent a boost to Aruba's economy. Generating power through liquefied natural gas rather than more expensive fuel oil has significant potential to reduce costs both for the refinery and the island. Prime Minister Mike Eman and Minister of Finance & Energy Mike de Meza, who are both actively working on this project, also see an important synergy between Aruba and Valero in this endeavor.

Valero has spent more than \$90 million so far getting the refinery ready to operate. The restart comes nearly 18 months after it was shut down in July 2009 for economic reasons and uncertainty in the tax regime going forward. The restart was supported in part by the settlement agreement reached with the Government of Aruba and approved by the Parliament of Aruba last May. Throughout the shutdown, employees remained on the payrolls, and in June 2010, Valero announced that the tax settlement along with an improved economy had made it possible to consider restarting the refinery. □

*Aruba's Minister of Justice Arthur Dowers at The Hague*

## Dowers meets with Dutch Kingdom Ministers



THE HAGUE--The four Kingdom Ministers of Justice agreed last Monday to jointly monitor progress and quality in the maintenance of law and order and the administration of justice. The next meeting takes place in St. Maarten on June 20, 2011.

Besides maintenance of law and order, the Justice Ministers discussed the Joint Court of Justice, the Prosecutor's Offices and Police. It was their first meeting in this setting with Curaçao and St. Maarten each having their own Justice Minister at the table, after the islands obtained the status of country within the Kingdom on October 10 this year. Dutch special municipalities Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba were represented by their interim representative Hans Gerritse.

The decision list stated that parties would continue to implement the Kingdom Consensus Laws in the field of Justice in 2011. These laws concern the Joint Court of Justice, the Prosecutor's Offices of Curaçao, St. Maarten and Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba, police and the Council for the Maintenance of Law and Order (Raad voor de Rechtshandhaving).

Ministers Ivo Opstelten of the

Netherlands, Elmer Wilsoe of Curaçao, Arthur Dowers of Aruba and Roland Duncan of St. Maarten were especially satisfied with the positive developments in combating human-smuggling. In 2010 these developments have resulted in a better assessment of the Netherlands Antilles in the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report of the United States government.

It was agreed that Curaçao and St. Maarten would adapt their legislation to combat human-trafficking as soon as possible. There will be an expert meeting on human-trafficking/smuggling and illegal immigration in March 2011.

The Ministers agreed that they would continue the memorandum of understanding in the area of human-smuggling, human-trafficking and illegal migration. St. Maarten is seeking additional assistance from the Royal Dutch Marechaussee to combat illegal immigration and human-trafficking/smuggling. Opstelten, Wilsoe, Dowers and Duncan qualified the meeting as "open and constructive," during a press conference at the end of the consultation.

"We have great ambition to

continue with the next steps," said Opstelten. "This time the atmosphere was constructive. I understood that this was not always the case in the past," said Dowers.

Minister Duncan said that St. Maarten had to execute four plans of approach in the justice area.

These plans of approach involve tasks that St. Maarten wasn't ready to assume on its own when it acquired country status. "We are working on these plans. There are many challenges. We will see how far we get, considering our lack of finances," he said.

Minister Wilsoe used the opportunity to vent his feelings on how, in his view, justice should be dealt with in Curaçao. "I am focused on results and I look at things a bit more pragmatically and self-willed," he said.

He added that his heart went out to the youth on his island. "We are doing things wrong if we do nothing about preventing crime among youngsters. We can keep investing money in projects, but it will yield no result."

A former Lt. Governor of Curaçao, Wilsoe said it was vital to invest in education and prevention. He said that justice involved detention and prevention components, and that more attention was needed for the prevention part. "Otherwise we'll continue having people in prison without any perspective," he said, mentioning the Court of Guardianship, Rehabilitation, assistance for victims, self-help and community organisations.

Some of the highlights of the decision list that the Ministers signed were: 2011 will be the start-up year to build the Prosecutor's Offices of Curaçao, St. Maarten and Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba; the Attorney General will draft a proposal for a multi-annual policy programme to combat border-crossing crime; Curaçao will submit a candidate for the Council for the Maintenance of Law and Order; a work group will be appointed before the end of this year to draft a definite list of standard weapons and ammunition for police; countries will make a maximum effort to stop human-trafficking; the current cooperation in the joint border-control teams will be continued in 2011; the Netherlands will keep making Royal Dutch Marechaussee available on the islands. □



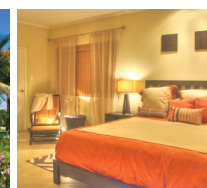


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**ORANJESTAD** — During the year-end Christmas Gala Celebration at the Renaissance Convention Center La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club recognized its top performers from among resort associates.

The coveted titles of Associate, Supervisor, Manager and Team of the Year, were bestowed on much-deserving individuals. Angel Santos won the resort's Associate of the Year title with Nicolasa Ventura as 2<sup>nd</sup> runner

up and Damian Tromp as the 1st runner up. Three Supervisors of the Year nominees yielded just one winner, Glenda Brokke. Avilia Ridderstaat received the honor on her behalf.



Mildred Clemencia and Helen Werleman were the other two outstanding nominees for the Supervisor of the Year title. Three Manager of the Year nominees yielded just one winner, Miriam Courtar. Igmarr Franken and Ena Vrolijk were the other two outstanding nominees for Manager of the Year title.

The driven and motivated Housekeeping 3-B Team, became Team of the Year for the resort, received with applause and warm congratulations. The award ceremony was flanked with music by Robert Jeandor and followed by a traditional Champagne toast and a fun balloon drop. □





Alumni Of The University Of Maastricht

# The Aruba Marine Park intrigues Alumni



PALM BEACH - On Sunday December 12, 2010, a group of 17 local Alumni of the University of Maastricht, the Netherlands, set sail to enjoy a nice afternoon on the Aruban Waters. The group of Alumni, that live in Aruba currently consists of approximately 40 members and is still increasing. Every few months

the group organizes social and/or educational events, sponsored by the Maastricht University, to increase the social network between the Alumni and to enhance their knowledge. Dr. Rudy Davelaar, initiator and board member of the Aruba Marine Park Foundation, joined the group on its sail trip to lecture

on the beauty and the dangers that threaten the Aruban sea life. The goal of the Aruba Marine Park Foundation is to create awareness of the decrease of the Sea life, and to protect the sea life in the Aruban Waters by, amongst others, controlling water sports and regulating fishing. The group was very impressed



by the presentation of Dr. Rudy Davelaar, that created educational part of the trip and the relaxing sailing and snorkeling experience. □



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## HUMAN HINTS

# Self Aware Game Pieces

As much as we would like to think that we have some say in our lives, we don't. We as the self-aware game piece in the Human Game, have no control over what we feel and experience in the hologram. As self aware game pieces each playing our own private game, we can change the details of the experience, but we can't alter the overall tone of our own movie. Our Free Will can alter only the meaningless details. We have no control over our emotional reaction to the details, which is what the Human Game is all about.

We can only experience what our Expanded Self wants us to experience. If a specific emotion is written into your personal full-immersion holographic movie, the action or lack of action by you, the actor, the Player in the Game, will not make a bit of difference to the story line. The actor injects his own personality into the story that is written. If two actors play the same role, the movie follows the same story to the same ending.

We, the Players, have no power to change the movie. We can only act out the role that our expanded self has written specifically and exactly for us. The details of the story don't matter. We will experience the emotional journey that we signed up for, no matter what choices our limited physical selves make.

The player's power lies in completely letting go and allowing the movie to play out. When we surrender to the movie our Expanded Self has written for us, we flow with our Life's natural path.

Go to [www.HumanHints.com](http://www.HumanHints.com) to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

### ~*Quentin Danziger*

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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# PRESIDENTS ARE TRIANGULATORS

Bill Clinton's appearance this month at the White House lectern in support of President Barack Obama's high-noon tax deal set the press buzzards buzzing. The remarks of the Great Triangulator were proof, or so they buzzed, that Barack Obama was triangulating too, as if that were a mortal sin. History shows that triangulation is at worst a venial sin.

The return of the Big Dog, as Clinton sometimes is called, also was seen as evidence that Obama had been forced to the right and diminished since coming into the White House -- though presidential drift to the left in domestic policy (see Nixon, Richard) or taxes (see Bush, George H.W.) is often seen in the press as confirmation that a chief executive has grown.

Two factors will exonerate Obama as a courageous visionary or convict him for craven opportunism. One is the economy, over which Obama has discovered he has little control. The other is the verdict of the voters, who demonstrated last month that they would not forever swoon at Obama's command.

If the economy rebounds and if the voters rush back to Obama's side -- and surely the latter will not happen if the former does not -- then he will be regarded as a magus. If it doesn't and they don't, he'll be regarded as a miscreant.

So for the purposes of this morning's conversation over coffee, let's leave the judging to others, or maybe to history. Let's simply pass the cream and recall that presidents like to think they are as stable as Plymouth Rock when in fact they drift like the Mayflower.

To prove this we need not go back to Thomas Jefferson, who found a way to embrace the Louisiana Purchase even though he didn't believe in territorial expansion, or to Franklin Roosevelt, who had few fixed principles and was, in Herbert Hoover's timeless phrase, a chameleon on plaid. We need only examine a handful of presidents in Obama's own 49-year lifetime.

Start with Lyndon Johnson, who in October 1964 vowed that "we are not about to send American boys nine or 10 thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." He was, of course, the president who escalated the American presence in Vietnam to 536,000 troops.

But he was also the president who, based on his expansive view of American freedoms and his intuitive sense of Americans' commitment to equality, broke with his own region and his own political mentors (especially his beloved Richard Russell) to side with the black freedom movement and sign two of the landmark civil-rights measures in American history.

"He was known to be friendly toward civil rights, but going full tilt the way he did was unexpected," Harry C. McPherson Jr., who was special counsel and chief speechwriter to Johnson in the White House, said in a conversation last week. "But history intervened. He had to move forward as vigorously as he did. There was a whole movement out there in the country changing the public's views. The fire hoses, the dogs, the freedom riders, the burning buses -- we now know that he could

not have ignored them."

No president in American history has confounded so many people as Richard M. Nixon, who rose to prominence in the late 1940s as a fractious Cold Warrior and who won a triumphant re-election battle in large measure because of his rapprochement with the twin symbols of communism, the nations then called Soviet Russia and Red China.

But for Nixon, a classic triangulator known as Tricky Dick, his trips to China (soon after the 1972 Iowa caucuses) and the Soviet Union (as anti-war Sen. George S. McGovern of South Dakota was wrapping up the Democratic presidential nomination) were not the only angles he played.

The mature Nixon was an ideological isosceles. He went against his party and every assumption when, in a much-forgotten but hauntingly relevant episode in February 1971, he called for a program of health insurance covering every American, using the private insurance sector but with an employer mandate to provide coverage, a federal subsidy for those unable to pay and shared risk pools.

This was the same conservative who created the Environmental Protection Agency, expanded the food-stamp program and supported open-housing legislation that many conservatives (especially in the Southern states he courted so openly, so assiduously and so cynically) feared and opposed. He also supported wage and price controls in 1971 and ended the convertibility of the dollar to gold, both anathema to conservatives.

"Nixon was willing to go against his own constituencies," said John R. Price, who in the Nixon White House was special assistant to the president and executive secretary of the Council for Urban Affairs and now is the head of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh. "He had a long view and weighed the politics with his real interest in the substance. But you can only do so much of this. Nixon always tacked back and re-gathered the reins on his own troops."

All of which tacks us back to Obama, who was 2 when Johnson took office and 7 when Nixon took office. He is selling his tax compromise, reviled by liberals as Democratic apostasy and scorned by some conservatives as a mealy-mouthed surrender to high deficits, as the work of someone who did what he promised to do in the campaign: to bring "Democrats and Republicans to the table -- to put together a compromise and work through our differences," as he put it in his radio address earlier this month.

Surely it has been Obama's goal to live up to Alexander Hamilton's characterization of George Washington as someone who "consulted much, pondered much, resolved slowly, resolved surely."

But in truth he acts a lot more like Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon. The shock for someone who lived through the Johnson and Nixon years is the recognition that years from now what he's doing might not look half bad -- indeed, good enough for government work. □



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### U.S. TOURIST STABBED

*Continued from Front Page*

Police said there were no signs that Wilson had been sexually assaulted or robbed.

Wilson told Israeli media that two Arab men approached her and Logan as they rested during a hike in the hills outside Jerusalem. She said the men asked them for water, and then she and her friend walked away. Thinking the men had left, the women headed back to the main trail when suddenly they were attacked.

"It all happened so fast. They came and attacked us," Wilson, 46, told reporters.

She said one of the men took out a knife that looked "like a bread knife with a serrated edge." Logan then "became hysterical" and the men began to stab them, Wilson said.

"It was clear that they came to kill," she added. "Who carries around a knife like that?"

At one point, Wilson said one of the assailants gently took a Star of David chain off her neck, "then turned me around and stabbed in the place where the Star of David had been."

Wilson said she pretended to be dead, even as she could hear her friend dying. She said she waited for two minutes, then made her way back to a parking lot several hundred yards (meters) away where she found help.

Hospital staff cut off the interview after about five minutes and refused to

make her available for further comment.

After Wilson reported the incident, police and paramedics launched a large-scale hunt and located Logan's body early Sunday buried under some bushes, about 20 yards (meters) from where the attack was believed to have occurred. The site is inside Israel, not far from the frontier with the West Bank.

Around midday, Israeli police raided a hospital outside the nearby West Bank town of Bethlehem in search of suspects, believing the assailants might have been injured in the struggle.

"I saw there were...jeeps and lots of soldiers surrounding the hospital," said Edmund Shehadeh, director of the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation.

He said the troops wanted a list of patients and interviewed some doctors and nurses during the half-hour investigation. But by



nightfall, no arrests had been made.

There was no claim of responsibility, which Palestinian militants usually make after deadly attacks. That suggested that the attack, even if politically motivated, was not planned by a militant group.

Police spokeswoman Rosenfeld said he did not

have Logan's hometown. The U.S. Embassy said it had no information on the case, but said it was in touch with Israeli authorities.

The killing occurred just ahead of Christmas — a peak tourist season for Israel and the Palestinians. Israel's Tourism Ministry declined comment.

Dr. Yuval Weiss, director

of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, told Army Radio he expected Wilson to be released within several days.

This would not be the first time that hikers were attacked and killed.

In the 1990s, four Israeli hikers were killed in two separate attacks in the West Bank. □



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# Opposition leaders arrested after riots in Belarus

JIM HEINTZ,  
YURAS KARMANAU

Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — In the biggest challenge to authoritarian leader Alexander Lukashenko in 16 years in power, thousands of demonstrators massed outside the main government office to protest alleged vote fraud in Sunday's presidential election, but club-swinging riot police drove them off and beat many.

The violent night left in doubt the next step for Belarus, which is of interest to the Kremlin because of its position as a buffer between Russia and the West. The West, for its part, has been offended by Lukashenko's harsh rule and his resistance to change.

Three of the candidates who ran against Lukashenko were arrested and the top opposition leader, Vladimir Neklyayev, was forcefully taken from the hospital by unknown men in civilian clothes, activists said. Neklyayev's aide said seven men wrapped Neklyayev in a blanket on his hospital bed and carried him outside as his wife screamed, locked

in a neighboring room. His whereabouts are currently unknown. Neklyayev and two other candidates were severely beaten in clashes with government forces.

The demonstration and its violent end all happened even before preliminary results were announced. But opposition supporters were convinced that Lukashenko would fake the tally. In previous elections, none of which were judged free and fair by Western observers, Lukashenko tallied 80 percent or more.

This year's election had given tantalizing hints that the repressive political climate might be changing in the ex-Soviet state. Not only were nine candidates allowed to challenge Lukashenko, they were even given unprecedented access to state broadcast media to conduct debates.

But if Lukashenko had been looking, or trying to look, like he was flirting with democracy, the romance was clearly over within three hours of the polls closing.

The crowd that gathered in central Minsk, estimated



**Opposition demonstrators try to storm the government building in the Belarusian capital, early Monday, Dec. 20, 2010. Thousands of opposition supporters in Belarus tried to storm the main government building to protest what the opposition claims was large-scale vote-rigging in Sunday's presidential election.**

Associated Press

by the opposition at tens of thousands, was significantly larger than protesters who massed after the 2006 elections. But those protests were allowed to go on sporadically for a week; Sunday's didn't make it until midnight.

As riot police beat on their shields to drive the crowd away from the government

offices, the defiant crowd matched the rhythmic blows with the chant "We will come back." However, it was unclear how long such bravado could last in the face of harsh crackdowns.

"Repression and arrested have stopped the wave of protests," said candidate Yaroslav Romanchuk. "Street democracy is over."

But anger remains high.

"We had a peaceful protest and it is the authorities who used force," said Marat Titovets, a 40-year-old engineer. "After Lukashenko spilled blood, he cannot remain in power."

Protesters broke windows and glass doors of the government building, which also houses the Central Election Commission, but they were repelled by riot police waiting inside. Hundreds more riot police and Interior Ministry troops then arrived in trucks and sent most of the demonstrators fleeing. Some tried to hide in the courtyards of nearby apartment buildings, but were bludgeoned by troops waiting inside the courtyards.

Neklyayev was beaten by riot police while leading a few hundred of his supporters to the demonstration and was taken by ambulance to a hospital, according to his wife.

His left eye was bruised, his nose was bleeding and he was nauseous and unable to speak, Olga Neklyayeva told the Associated Press.

Another opposition candidate, Vitaly Rymashevsky, was beaten in clashes with riot police by the government building. He claimed that the people who attempted to storm the building were police acting as demonstrators and that he was attacked when he tried to stop them. □



**A firefighter carries a puppy after an oil pipeline explosion in the town of San Martin Texmelucan, Mexico, Sunday Dec. 19, 2010. An oil pipeline operated by Mexico's state-owned oil company Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex, exploded early Sunday when thieves were attempting to steal oil, killing at least 27 people, injuring at least 52 people and scorching more than 115 homes, authorities said.**

Associated Press

E. EDUARDO CASTILLO

Associated Press

SAN MARTIN TEXMELUCAN, Mexico (AP) — A massive oil pipeline explosion lay waste to parts of a central Mexican city Sunday, incinerating people, cars, houses and trees as gushing crude turned streets into flaming rivers. At least 27 people were killed, 12 of them children, in a disaster authorities blamed on oil thieves. The blast in San Martin Texmelucan, estimated to have affected 5,000 residents in a three-mile radius, scorched homes and cars and left metal and pavement twisted from the

## Mexican city devastated by pipeline blast; 27 die

intense heat and in some cases burned to ash.

Relatives sobbed as firefighters pulled charred bodies from the incinerated homes, some of the remains barely more than piles of ashes and bones. Officials recovered 26 bodies by late Sunday and had identified 18 of them.

Housewife Zoyla Perez Cortes, 27, said she awoke about 5:30 a.m. to a strange, overpowering smell, like gasoline. Minutes later, her street erupted in flames. Her husband knocked down a wall allowing them to escape out the back of their two-story, cement-brick home with their three children.

Her brother-in-law is being treated for burns in a hospital, but she doesn't know the fate of his wife and two children.

"It was like we were living in an inferno," she said, her eyes red from crying. "Everything was covered in smoke."

Aside from the deaths, at least 52 people were hurt and at least 200 were in shelters after fleeing San Martin, which is about 55 miles east of Mexico City. More than 115 homes were scorched, 30 of them destroyed.

The explosion was apparently caused by thieves trying to steal crude oil, said Valentin Meneses, interior secretary for the state of Puebla, where San Martin is located. Investigators found a hole in the pipeline and equipment for extracting crude, said Laura Gurza, chief of the federal Civil Protection emergency response agency. "They lost control because of the high pressure with which the fuel exits the pipeline," he said, adding that the oil began to flow down the city's streets and into a nearby river. □



# U.N. Security Council meets on Korea tensions

EDITH M. LEDERER

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — World powers trying to defuse tensions between North and South Korea met in an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council on Sunday, but diplomats said China objects to the North being singled out for criticism over two deadly attacks this year that have helped send relations to their lowest point in decades.

China and Russia, the countries with the closest ties to North Korea, have expressed concern about the South Korean military's plans to conduct one-day, live-fire drills by Tuesday on the same front-line island the North shelled last month as the South conducted a similar exercise.

The United States supports South Korea, a staunch ally, and says any country has a right to train for self-defense.

The North warned of a "catastrophe" if South Korea goes ahead with the drills. The reclusive communist government in Pyongyang said it would strike back harder than it did last month, when two South Korean marines and two civilians were killed on Yeonpyeong Island.

South Korea says the drills are routine, defensive in nature and should not be considered threatening.

Russia called for the Security Council meeting, and Moscow proposed a draft statement that would have the U.N.'s most powerful body call on North Korea and South Korea "to exercise maximum restraint" and urge immediate diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions. It would also ask Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to appoint an envoy "to consult on urgent measures" to peacefully settle the crisis.

Most council members, including the United States which holds the rotating council presidency this month, viewed the Russian draft as unfairly equating the actions of the two Koreas, according to council diplomats. They spoke on condition of anonymity because the talks are taking place in private.

The United States, Britain, France and many others on the 15-nation body demanded that the council condemn North Korea for the Nov. 23 shelling of Yeonpyeong island that killed four people, and the March 26 sinking of the South Korean warship Cheonan, which killed 46 sailors and was blamed on a North Korean torpedo, the diplomats said.

During more than five hours of closed-door negotiations, the diplomats said Russia showed "flexibility" on a compromise text that included a condemnation of North Korea. But China refused to agree to any condemnation of the North and even opposed including the name of Yeonpyeong Island, insisting that the statement refer to events of Nov. 23, the diplomats said.

The council then moved into a private meeting in its formal chamber so North Korea and South Korea could make their case to members, the diplomats said.

Despite China's apparent staunch opposition to any condemnation, the diplomats said they haven't given up hope of a compromise.

The council began meeting shortly after 11 a.m. EST (1600 GMT) and heard a briefing from U.N. political chief B. Lynn Pascoe on the situation in the Koreas.

The council diplomat said Pascoe echoed Ban, who on Friday called the Nov. 23 attack on the tiny island of Yeonpyeong "one of the gravest provocations since the end of (the) Korean War." Ban was South Korea's foreign minister before becoming secretary-general in 2007. He said he is following events closely and is seriously concerned over the rising tensions.

The Russian draft presidential statement circulated to Security Council members and obtained by The Associated Press does not mention either the Nov. 23 attack or the Cheonan sinking. □



South Korean protesters shout slogans during an anti-war and anti-government rally in Seoul, South Korea, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2010. South Korea said Saturday it will go ahead with artillery drills on a border island shelled by North Korea last month despite Pyongyang's threat to retaliate again, as Russia and China expressed concerns over tension on the volatile peninsula. The Korean read: "President Lee Myung-bak Step Down."

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By **ARUBA TODAY**

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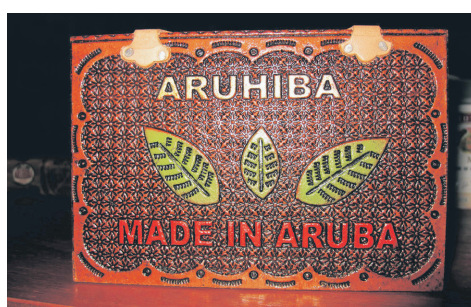
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# Lindsey Vonn is 2010 AP Female Athlete of Year

In this Feb. 17, 2010, file photo, Lindsey Vonn of the United States, shows the gold medal she won in the Women's downhill, during the medal ceremony at the Vancouver 2010 Olympics in Whistler, British Columbia. Vonn was named the 2010 Female Athlete of the Year, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2010, chosen by member of The Associated Press.

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## SPORTS Aruba TODAY

On Top Of The News Email: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) website: [www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com) Tel: 582-7800 Monday, December 20, 2010

### Falcons clinch playoff spot before kickoff

NEW YORK (AP) — The Atlanta Falcons and Pittsburgh Steelers have clinched National Football League playoff berths, and neither team even needed to win.

Atlanta got in because the Philadelphia Eagles rallied to beat the New York Giants 38-31 on Sunday. With their 34-18 victory at Seattle, the Falcons are 12-2 and first in the NFC South. At worst, they will be a wild card, but they have a two-game lead in the division over New Orleans, which lost at Baltimore 30-24. A win next week at home over the Saints will give the Falcons the division title.

*Continued on Page B3*

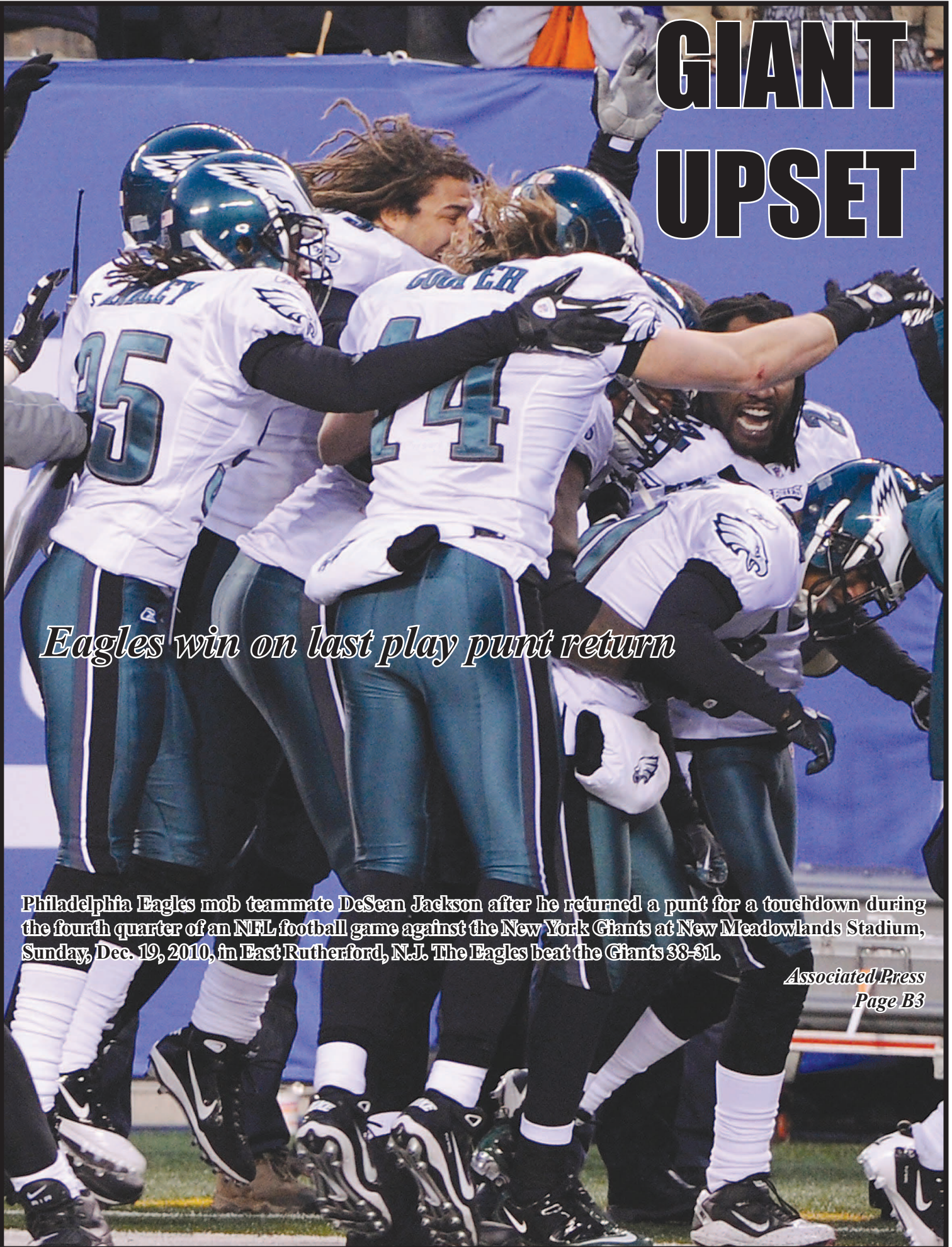
### UConn women win 88th straight, matching UCLA men



Connecticut coach Geno Auriemma disputes a call in the first half against Ohio State in an NCAA college basketball game of the Maggie Dixon Classic at Madison Square Garden in New York, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010.

*Associated Press  
Read Page B5*

## GIANT UPSET



*Eagles win on last play punt return*

Philadelphia Eagles mob teammate DeSean Jackson after he returned a punt for a touchdown during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game against the New York Giants at New Meadowlands Stadium, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010, in East Rutherford, N.J. The Eagles beat the Giants 38-31.

*Associated Press  
Page B3*



# Lindsey Vonn is 2010 AP Female Athlete of Year



In this March 13, 2010, file photo, Lindsey Vonn of the United States, holds the Women's World Cup overall title trophy as she sits next to some of the World Cup discipline trophies she won during the season in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. Vonn was named the 2010 Female Athlete of the Year, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2010, chosen by member of The Associated Press.

**HOWARD FENDRICH**  
AP Sports Writer

Lindsey Vonn is the 2010 Female Athlete of the Year, chosen by members of The Associated Press.

She's the first skier — male or female — to win one of the annual AP awards, which began in 1931.

Vonn received 77 of 175 votes submitted by news organizations that make up the AP's membership. That is more than double what anyone else got in the tally

announced on Saturday.

Vonn won two medals at the Vancouver Olympics, including the first downhill gold for an American woman, and captured her third consecutive World Cup overall title.

"For sure, 2010 was the best year I've ever had," the 26-year-old Vonn said in a telephone interview from France, where she won a World Cup downhill race on Saturday. "It couldn't have gone any better for

me. Even if I just won the Olympic gold medal, that would have made it the best year of my career and the best day of my life, period. Winning the World Cup races and the overall title just topped it off."

Racehorse Zenyatta's 32 votes placed her No. 2 in the AP balloting for the second consecutive year. The 6-year-old mare retired with a 19-1 record and a North American earnings record for female horses. Her only loss was a narrow one in the Breeders' Cup Classic. University of Connecticut basketball player Maya Moore finished third with 29 votes, followed by tennis star Serena Williams with 14. No one else got more than five votes.

Moore led UConn to its second straight unbeaten season and U.S. college championship in April. With a victory on Sunday against Ohio State, UConn

can match the Division I college record 88-game winning streak set by John Wooden's UCLA men's team in 1974.

Williams — the 2002 and 2009 Female Athlete of the Year — was limited to six tournaments this year because of injuries, but she still won two Grand Slam titles.

Vonn also won a bronze medal in the super-G at the Vancouver Games. Then she became the first woman with three overall World Cup titles in a row since Petra Kronberger of Austria in 1990-92.

"Her dominance is very impressive. It's really a testament to her work ethic," said U.S. Olympic teammate Ted Ligety, an Alpine gold medalist at the 2006 Turin Games. "I can't really name anybody that works harder than she does." Vonn needed all of that preparation to succeed

at Vancouver, where she showed up as the center of attention — and with a banged-up right shin that made walking difficult. She wondered whether she'd be able to compete at all. But after getting some extra time to rest because of weather delays, Vonn won the opening women's race, the downhill. "I don't think it could have been a better moment. I dreamed about it a million times, but it was so much more emotional for me and for my family than I ever thought it would be. I was just crying the entire time," Vonn said. "When I say that it means everything to me, it really does. The Olympics are what I work for. They're why I spend so much time in the gym. It's why my family moved (from Minnesota to Colorado) for me to ski race, so I could pursue my dream of being Olympic champion." □

## Teenage sailor on solo voyage reaches St. Maarten



Fifteen-year-old Laura Dekker walks toward the immigration office upon her arrival to Simpson Bay Lagoon near Philipsburg in the Caribbean island of St. Maarten, Sunday Dec. 19, 2010

By JUDY FITZPATRICK  
Associated Press

PHILIPSBURG, St. Maarten — A 15-year-old Dutch sailor on Sunday completed the longest leg so far of her attempted circumnavigation

of the globe, saying it felt "really weird" to be back on dry land after nearly three weeks out in the ocean.

Fifteen-year-old Laura Dekker, aiming to become the youngest person to sail solo around the world, was in good spirits after completing the 2,200 nautical-mile (2,532 land-mile, 4,074-kilometer) trip from the Cape Verde Islands off West Africa.

Dekker anchored Guppy, her 38-foot (11.5-meter) ketch, just outside Simpson Bay Lagoon after what she called "a very nice trip" so far. She later steered it into the lagoon as a crowd gathered at the docks and snapped pictures.

"It's really weird. It's not moving and not bouncy," she told The Associated Press as she tried to find her land legs while strolling in flip-flops along a sidewalk to the Dutch territory's immigration office. "I don't think I can live in a

house at the moment."

The Dutch teenager started her trip from Gibraltar on Aug. 21 and spent two months in the Canary Islands waiting for the hurricane season to pass. She left the Cape Verde Islands on Dec. 2. Dekker's venture stirred an intense debate about whether young people should be allowed to sail the world's oceans alone. A Dutch court originally blocked the voyage and only permitted her to set off after she took measures to manage the risks.

She bought a bigger, sturdier boat than the one she originally planned to use, fitted it with advanced navigation and radar equipment, and took courses in first aid and coping with sleep deprivation.

In the end, the Dutch court ruled that her preparations were adequate and it was up to her parents, who are divorced, to decide whether to let her make the attempt. □

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# Jackson scores on punt return to lead Eagles

**The Associated Press**

**EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.** (AP) — DeSean Jackson scored on a 65-yard punt return on the final play of the game and the Philadelphia Eagles scored 28 points in the final 7:28 to beat the New York Giants 38-31 and take over first place in the NFC East.

Emphasizing his candidacy for the most valuable player award, Michael Vick threw for two touchdowns and ran for another in the incredible late rally that all but clinched the division for the Eagles (10-4) and left Giants coach Tom Coughlin so angry he threw his notes as Jackson backed into the end zone.

Philadelphia swept the season series with New York (9-5) and only needs to win one of its final two games or have New York lose one of its two. Atlanta clinched a playoff spot with the Giants' loss.

Eli Manning threw four touchdown passes, including

an 8-yarder to Kevin Boss with 8:17 to play to help the Giants open a 31-10 lead.

## Colts 34, Jaguars 24

**INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.** (AP) — Peyton Manning threw two touchdown passes and Donald Brown ran for another score as Indianapolis stayed in the playoff hunt.

The Colts (8-6) share the AFC South lead with Jacksonville (8-6) and can clinch a seventh division title in eight years by winning their last two games. Jacksonville had a chance to secure the title with a victory, but again failed to sweep the season series. The Jaguars have never won two straight against Indianapolis.

Manning was 29 of 39 for 229 yards with no interceptions for the second straight game.

Indy also ended Maurice Jones-Drew's streak of consecutive 100-yard games at six. He carried 15 times for 46 yards, a career low against Indy.

## Ravens 30, Saints 24

**BALTIMORE, Md.** (AP) — Ray Rice ran for 153 yards and scored two touchdowns, and Baltimore ended New Orleans' six-game winning streak.

The Ravens (10-4) won by reviving their lagging running game and managing to hold onto a fourth-quarter lead.

Coming into the game, Rice hadn't had a run of more than 30 yards and reached the 100-yard mark only once. He had a 50-yard run in the fourth quarter and finished with his biggest rushing total since a 154-yard game last year against Cleveland.

Rice scored on a 10-yard run and caught a 17-yard pass from Joe Flacco.

## Bills 17, Dolphins 14

**MIAMI** (AP) — Ryan Fitzpatrick threw two touchdown passes and the resurgent Bills eliminated the Dolphins from playoff contention.

Buffalo looked woeful in a season-opening loss at home

## FALCONS

*Continued from Page B1*

Despite a 22-17 loss to the New York Jets, the Steelers (10-4) were told by the NFL nearly an hour after the game ended that they secured a playoff spot via a series of complicated strength-of-schedule tiebreakers.

Jacksonville could have clinched the AFC South, but lost at Indianapolis 34-24. The Colts and Jaguars are tied at 8-6, but the Colts take the division if they win out. They face Oakland and Tennessee.

Philadelphia (10-4) moved ahead of the Giants (9-5) with a sensational comeback capped by DeSean Jackson's 65-yard punt return on the final play.

The Eagles scored the last 28 points in the final 7:28. The Eagles need to win one of their last two games or have New York lose one of its two. Philly hosts Minnesota and Dallas, the Giants are at Green Bay and Washington.

"This is a special one," Eagles coach Andy Reid said of the comeback. "It was an exciting one. It was as exciting for you guys. It was a great day to be a Philadelphia writer."

New Orleans (10-4) is the top contender for an NFC wild card. The Giants and Packers are the other main challengers for a wild card.

Seattle (6-8) could still win the NFC West and didn't lose ground to co-leader St. Louis, which was beaten by Kansas City 27-13. San Francisco (5-9) also is in contention.

The Chiefs (9-5) will win the AFC West by sweeping their final two games, against Tennessee and Oakland. San Diego (8-6) is one game behind and has the tiebreaker if the Chargers and Chiefs finish the season tied.

Pittsburgh's loss to the Jets dropped it level with Baltimore atop the AFC North. But the Steelers still sneaked into the playoffs, and they hold the tiebreaker over the Ravens. Pittsburgh faces Carolina and Cleveland. □



against Miami, but that was before Fitzpatrick took over at quarterback. He went 16 for 26 for 223 yards in the rematch.

The Dolphins, who have won only once in Miami this season, again sputtered on offense. Chad Henne threw a costly interception and kicker Dan Carpenter went 0 for 4, missing from 48, 61, 53 and 48 yards.

Buffalo (4-10) won for the fourth time in six games after starting 0-8.

**CINCINNATI, Ohio** (AP) — Cedric Benson ran for a season-high 150 yards and a touchdown, and Cincinnati ended a 10-game losing streak that matched the longest in franchise history.

The Bengals (3-11) hadn't won since Sept. 26.

Cincinnati took a straight-ahead approach against the Browns (5-9), who clinched their 10th losing record in 12 years since returning as an expansion team. The Browns got a TD pass from rookie Colt McCoy on a trick play and another on a botched Bengals coverage with 2:13 to go.

**In other NFL games it was** Kansas City 27, St. Louis 13; Dallas 33, Washington 30; Tennessee 31, Houston 17; Carolina 19, Arizona 12; Philadelphia 38, N.Y. Giants 31; Detroit 23, Tampa Bay 20, OT; Cincinnati 19, Cleveland 17; Buffalo 17, Miami 14; Indianapolis 34, Jacksonville 24; Baltimore 30, New Orleans 24; Atlanta 34, Seattle 18; Oakland 39, Denver 23; and N.Y. Jets 22, Pittsburgh 17. □



# UConn women win 88th straight, matching UCLA men



Connecticut celebrates in the final seconds of its 81-50 win over Ohio State in an NCAA college basketball game in the Maggie Dixon Classic at Madison Square Garden in New York, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010.

By **DOUG FEINBERG**

AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK – After win No. 88 in a row was in the books, Geno Auriemma finally let loose: He thinks some people are rooting against his record-setting players because of their gender.

“I just know there wouldn’t be this many people in the room if we were chasing a woman’s record,” the Connecticut coach said Sunday near the end of his postgame news conference. “The reason everybody is having a heart attack the last four or five

days is a bunch of women are threatening to break a men’s record, and everybody is all up in arms about it.”

Already with no equal in women’s basketball, UConn won its 88th straight game Sunday to match the men’s mark set by coach John

Wooden and his UCLA teams from 1971-74. Tiffany Hayes scored 26 points and Maya Moore added 22 to help the top-ranked Huskies rout No. 11 Ohio State 81-50 in the Maggie Dixon Classic at Madison Square Garden.

“All the women are happy as hell and they can’t wait to come in here and ask questions. All the guys that loved women’s basketball are all excited, and all the miserable (people) that follow men’s basketball and don’t want us to break the record are all here because they are (ticked),” Auriemma said.

The no-nonsense Auriemma had downplayed the significance of the streak as his team closed in on UCLA, promising that once the run was over he would finally open up.

But the Hall of Fame coach, known to rub folks the wrong way at times, has never been afraid to say what’s on his mind. “Because we’re breaking a men’s record, we’ve got a lot of people paying attention,” Auriemma said. “If we were breaking a women’s record, everybody

would go, ‘Aren’t those girls nice, let’s give them two paragraphs in USA Today, you know, give them one line on the bottom of ESPN and then let’s send them back where they belong, in the kitchen.’”

UConn already owned the longest winning streak in NCAA women’s basketball history. Next up, the Huskies (10-0) can surpass the UCLA men Tuesday night at home against No. 15 Florida State.

Connecticut matched the Bruins’ mark before a crowd of 15,232 — the second-biggest for a women’s game at Madison Square Garden. With 40 seconds left, the fans rose and chanted “88! 88!”

Unlike most of their previous wins during the streak, UConn players stuck around and celebrated at halfcourt. After the final buzzer, Auriemma found his family in the stands and hugged his smiling mother, then kissed his happy wife. “It’s kind of mind-boggling,” Moore said. “It’s something special, but we’re still in the middle of our season. You can’t take in the full reality of what’s going on. Moments like this you can sit and appreciate where you’ve come from.”

The Garden was a good place to make some history for UConn and its Hall of Fame coach.

Despite being raised in Philadelphia, Auriemma grew up a Knicks fan. The prized possession in his office at UConn isn’t any of the trophies or awards he’s won, it’s an autographed basketball of the New York starting five from the 1970 NBA championship team.

Coincidentally, the 88th straight win came against Auriemma’s good friend, Jim Foster, who gave him his coaching start. Auriemma was an assistant for the girls team under Foster back when both were at Bishop McDevitt High School in Philadelphia. When Foster got the St. Joseph’s women’s basketball job in 1978-79 he brought along Auriemma as an assistant coach. Neither could have imagined that 35 years later they would be facing each other at MSG with so much at stake. □

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# Lochte leaves with 6 golds and a silver

ANDREW DAMPF  
AP Sports Writer

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Ryan Lochte won three more events at the short-course world championships Sunday and headed home with an impressive haul of six golds and one silver.

On the final night of competition, Lochte started off with personal victories in the 200 backstroke and 100 individual medley, then pushed the United States ahead of Russia in the third leg of the 400 medley relay and celebrated as teammate Garrett Weber-Gale held on for the win. It was a fitting end for Lochte and the normally dominant U.S. team, which failed to win all of the other relays — in both the men's and women's competitions. Lochte won all five of his individual events, and six of his eight events overall. He failed to win a medal in just one event — the 400 freestyle relay on opening night when the Americans finished fourth. In two of his events — the 200 and 400 IM's — Lochte set world records, the only individual world records set all year in swimming after high-tech bodysuits were banned at the start of 2010.

"I guess I ended the year pretty good. All that hard work that I've done, it pays off," Lochte said. "I was just happy to get a world record without those suits."

Lochte led off his busy final night by posting a championship-record 1:46.68 in the 200 back, a massive 2.41 ahead of American teammate Tyler Clary. Fighting off fatigue, the Floridian then won the 100 IM in 50.86, 0.05 off his semifinal time but still 0.83 ahead of runner-up Markus Deibler of Germany. "I messed up a couple turns," Lochte said of the 100 IM. "I felt it a lot in my legs after the 200 back, but it's around the time I went in semis so I'll take it." The Americans won the relay in 3:20.99, 0.62 ahead of Russia.

"I told myself this afternoon we had to pound the American flag into the ground here and finish it off with a gold medal in that relay," said Weber-Gale. "I just knew that no matter what we had to do we were going to get it done. We had to."

Also Sunday, Cesar Cielo completed a sweep of the sprinting events, duplicating his feat at last year's long-course worlds in Rome. Cielo won the 100-meter freestyle in a championship-record 45.74 seconds, adding to his 50 free title Friday.

The Brazilian was ahead of world-record pace at the race's midpoint, but couldn't maintain his blistering speed. "It was harder than I expected. I thought I was going to be faster but a gold is always a gold," said Cielo, who also



United States' Nicholas Thoman, Garrett Weber-Gale, Mihail Alexandrov and Ryan Lochte, from left, show off their gold medals during the ceremony for the Men's 4x100m Medley Relay at the FINA Short Course Swimming World Championships in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010.

Associated Press

won the 50 free at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

"I'm hoping to stay at the top of my game until Brazil 2016," he said, looking beyond the 2012 London Games to his home Olympics four years later. "I'm going to have to keep training harder and harder." Fabien Gilot of France finished second, 0.23 behind, and Nikita Lobintsev of Russia touched third, 0.61 back, while Olympic champion Alain Bernard of France settled for fourth, 0.63 out. Dutch sprinter Ranomi Kromowidjojo also completed a sprint sweep, winning the women's 50 free in 23.37 to raise her total to three golds. She also anchored the Netherlands to victory in the 400 free relay.

Cielo got two bronzes with Brazil in the relays.

American breastroker Rebecca Soni also completed a sweep, adding the 200 title to her 50 and 100 victories to end the meet with three golds, plus a relay silver.

With Australian rival Leisel Jones sitting out, Soni won the 200 in a championship-record 2:16.39, 1.70 in front of China's Sun Ye and 2.43 ahead of Denmark's Rikke Moller Pedersen.

Felicity Galvez gave Australia its long-awaited first gold of the competition in the 100 butterfly, posting a championship-record 55.43 to edge Swedish veteran Therese Alshammar by 0.30.

Australia hasn't gone without gold at a short- or long-

course worlds since 1986 but was missing several top swimmers here after a busy season that included the Pan Pacific championships and the Commonwealth Games.

"I had some down time today to think and I thought we haven't got a gold for Australia all through this meet and I just thought to go out there and get it," Galvez said.

Also, Olympic champion Oussama Mellouli won the grueling 1,500 to the beat of a large throng of festive Tunisian fans; and Camille Muffat of France edged American swimmer Katie Hoff in the 200 free, while Olympic and world champion Federica Pellegrini finished seventh for her first loss in the event in nearly four years. □

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daily: 5:15 - 8:00	<b>PG</b>
matinee: 12:00 - 2:45	
late show: 11:00	
<b>FASTER</b>	
daily: 6:15 - 8:45	
matinee: 1:15 - 3:45	<b>R</b>
late show: 11:15	
<b>MEGAMIND 3D</b>	<b>SP</b>
daily: 4:45	<b>PG</b>
matinee: 12:15 - 2:30	
late show: 11:30	
<b>JACKASS</b>	
daily: 7:00 - 9:15	<b>R</b>
matinee: 11:30	
late show: 11:30	
<b>LOVE RANCH</b>	
daily: 4:00	<b>R</b>
matinee: 1:30	
late show: 11:30	
<b>THE TOURIST</b>	
daily: 6:00 - 8:30	
matinee: 1:00 - 3:30	<b>PG-13</b>
late show: 11:00	

### AT PASEO HERENCIA

<b>BLACK SWAN</b>	<b>NEW</b>
daily: 6:00 - 8:30 - 11:00	
matinee: 1:00 - 3:30	<b>R</b>
late show: 11:00	
<b>MEGA MINDY 2</b>	<b>NEW</b>
daily: 4:15	
matinee: 12:15 - 2:15	<b>PG</b>
late show: 11:00	
<b>NARNIA "THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER"</b>	<b>SP</b>
daily: 5:30 - 8:00	<b>PG</b>
matinee: 12:30 - 3:00	
late show: 11:00	
<b>THE TOURIST</b>	
daily: 6:15 - 8:45	
matinee: 12:45 - 3:30	<b>PG-13</b>
late show: 11:15	
<b>FASTER</b>	
daily: 4:00 - 6:30 - 9:00	
matinee: 1:30	<b>R</b>
late show: 11:30	
<b>LOVE AND OTHER DRUGS</b>	
daily: 6:15 - 8:45	
matinee: 12:45 - 3:30	<b>R</b>
late show: 11:15	
<b>BURLESQUE</b>	<b>SP</b>
daily: 6:15 - 8:45	<b>PG-13</b>
matinee: 11:15	
late show: 11:15	

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# Brewers go all in with trade for Royals' Greinke



In this June 29, 2007 file photo, Kansas City Royals pitcher Zack Greinke throws in the ninth inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Kansas City, Mo.

By CHRIS JENKINS

AP Sports Writer

MILWAUKEE — The Milwaukee Brewers are going all in for 2011, acquiring former Cy Young winner Zack Greinke in a trade Sunday with the Kansas City Royals. The Royals acquired shortstop Alcides Escobar, outfielder Lorenzo Cain and right-handed pitching prospects Jake Odorizzi and Jeremy Jeffress from the Brewers in exchange for Greinke, shortstop Yuniesky Betancourt

*Associated Press*

and cash considerations.

"Zack Greinke is one of the top young pitchers in the game today," Brewers general manager Doug Melvin said in a statement. "We are very excited to add him to our new rotation.

"Zack brings great physical skills and athleticism to the team and is an outstanding competitor. This trade is a credit to our scouting and player development staff as their hard work and judgment provided us the talented

prospects that Kansas City will be receiving. I also appreciate the support of ownership in making this deal."

Milwaukee outfielder Corey Hart said the move, along with a previous trade for starter Shaun Marcum, makes the Brewers a solid contender.

"We were getting better with Marcum, now Greinke," Hart said in a text message to The Associated Press. "Brewers are for real!"

Brewers slugger Ryan Braun said the deal was "amazing" in a separate text message.

"Don't really know him much yet but really looking forward to getting to know him!" he said. Royals general manager Dayton Moore said the deal made sense for Kansas City because the young players they acquired from Milwaukee fit into what is expected to be a wave of promising young players coming up through their system. Third baseman Mike Moustakas and first baseman Eric Hosmer could join the big league club this year. "We expect to be competitive next year," Moore said. "We're still working to improve our baseball team."

Moore indicated it took some direct talks between he and Greinke before the pitcher agreed to waive the no-trade clause in his contract.

"He was very much open to it at the end of the day," Moore said.

Greinke was 10-14 with a 4.17 ERA for the Royals last season. It was a step back from his standout 2009 season, when he went 16-8 with a 2.16 ERA and won the Cy Young award.

There are two years left on the four-year, \$38 million contract he signed with the Royals in January 2009. He is due \$13.5 million each of the final two seasons, although the Brewers got an undisclosed amount of cash back from the Royals as part of the deal.

Greinke is 60-67 with a 3.82 ERA in six-plus seasons with the Royals. He sat out most of the 2006 season because of an anxiety disorder and considered quitting baseball.

"A big part of my heart will always pull for Zack," Moore said. "What he overcame, the success he had here, to the point it's not easy to make these types of deals. You

would prefer to have him here and sign him long-term but it just wasn't something we could do."

Moore expects Greinke to thrive in the National League. "This guy's one of the best fielding pitchers in the game," Moore said. "You can't bunt on him. He holds runners. He's a studier. I think he's going to do terrific."

Reports of a potential deal sending Greinke to Milwaukee surfaced online late Saturday.

With the deal, the Brewers have taken two big steps to bolster their starting rotation — the team's main weak spot in back-to-back disappointing seasons. Earlier this month, Milwaukee made a trade with Toronto to obtain Marcum for highly regarded infield prospect Brett Lawrie.

It's an indication the Brewers are serious about making a playoff run in 2011 — presumably making it far less likely that the team would trade first baseman Prince Fielder, who can become a free agent at the end of the season and has been the subject of widespread trade speculation. □

## Short-handed Suns edge Thunder 113-110

By JEFF LATZKE

AP Sports Writer

OKLAHOMA CITY — Grant Hill scored a season-high 30 points and had 11 rebounds, Steve Nash added 20 points and 10 assists and the short-handed Phoenix Suns snapped Oklahoma City's five-game winning streak by beating the Thunder 113-110 on Sunday night.

Phoenix played while waiting for trade acquisitions Vince Carter, Marcin Gortat and Mickael Pietrus to join the team but found a way to edge past the Thunder down the stretch.

The Suns let a 13-point lead slip away but were able to recover and take the lead for good on Robin Lopez's right-handed dunk with 6:45 left. Oklahoma City got within a point in the final 7 seconds, but never got the chance to take the lead as the teams traded foul shots.

Kevin Durant led the Thunder with 28 points, and Russell Westbrook and Jeff Green scored 19 apiece. Lopez's dunk started a burst of six straight points for Phoenix, with Nash adding a jumper and Hill hitting two free throws to make it 100-94 with 4:58 remaining. That provided just enough of a cushion for the Suns.

Durant twice got Oklahoma City within two points, but Nash set up a reverse layup by Josh Childress and Channing Frye spun for a two-handed jam that bumped the advantage back up to 106-100.

Durant brought the Thunder back again with a runner and a jumper in the lane, but he then had the ball stolen away by Childress with a chance for Oklahoma City to tie.

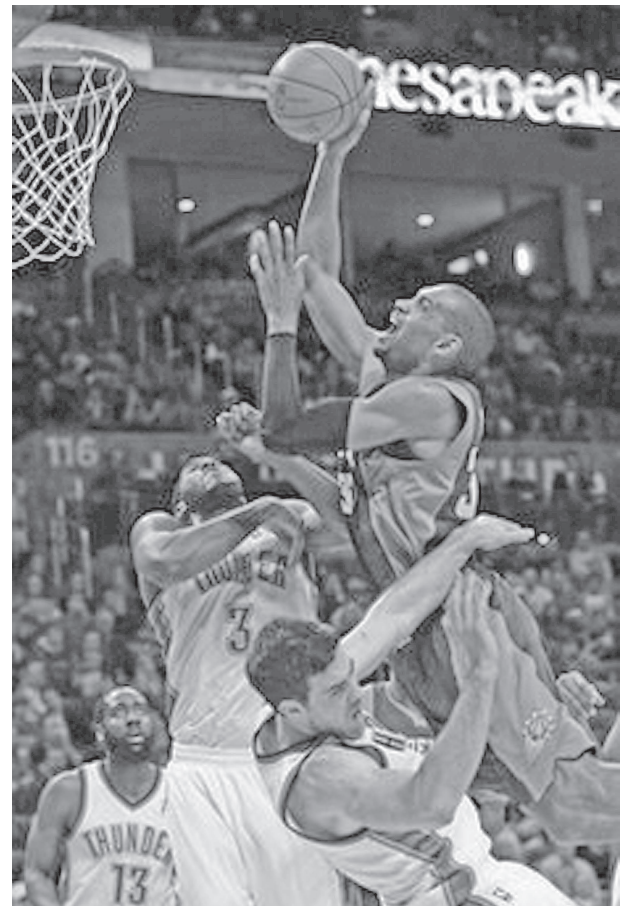
The Thunder didn't get another similar chance until the final seconds, when Goran Dragic fouled Westbrook in the backcourt to try to protect a three-point lead. Westbrook tried heaving the ball toward the basket and earn three free throws, but officials ruled that he wasn't shooting at the time of the foul. Oklahoma City got one last chance after Frye missed the second of two foul shots with 2.4 seconds left, but Green's desperation shot from halfcourt wouldn't fall.

Lopez finished with 19 points and the Suns had six players score in double figures — Frye had 12, Earl Barron added 11 and Childress 10.

After losing four of their last five games, the Suns overhauled their roster by trading Jason Richardson, Hedo Turkoglu and Earl Clark to Orlando a day earlier. That left them undermanned until replacements arrive — possibly not until they play Miami on Thursday in Phoenix.

The good news: Nash came back after missing most of a loss to Dallas two nights earlier after he hurt his neck in a collision with Tyson Chandler.

Phoenix didn't miss a beat, scoring the first seven points of the game and leading by nine within the first 4 minutes. □



Phoenix Suns forward Grant Hill, top, goes over Oklahoma City Thunder's Nick Collison, bottom, and D.J. White (3) while going to the basket in the second quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010.

*Associated Press*



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**TODAY**





# Lindsey Vonn wins World Cup super-combi race



Lindsey Vonn, of the United States, races on her way to win an alpine ski, women's World Cup super-combined race, in Val D'Isere, France, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010. American skier Lindsey Vonn won a World Cup super-combined race Sunday after following up her dominant performance in the super-G with an assured slalom run.

*Associated Press*

JEROME PUGMIRE  
AP Sports Writer

VAL D'ISERE, France (AP)  
— Lindsey Vonn moved back

to the top of the World Cup standings on Sunday with another dominant performance in Val d'Isere, winning a super-combined race the day after a masterful downhill.

Vonn had the fastest time in the super-G in the morning and followed it up with an assured slalom run in the afternoon. The win moved Vonn three points ahead of rival Maria Riesch of Germany in the overall standings, 581-578. Austria's Elisabeth Goergl is far behind in third with 366.

"This weekend helps with the points (but) it's a long season, there's a lot of races left to go," Vonn said. "I'm not really looking at the points right now."

Vonn is aiming for a fourth consecutive overall title and secured her third race win this season, all in different disciplines. She won a downhill on Saturday after a super-G victory over Riesch at Lake Louise, Alberta, this month.

"I was really happy with this weekend, it couldn't have gone any better," Vonn said. "I just haven't trained very much slalom since the races

in Aspen, so I felt confident but I wasn't exactly sure how it would go. I was definitely very nervous at the start."

Vonn's second straight victory came a day after she was honored as the 2010 Female Athlete of the Year as chosen by members of The Associated Press.

Vonn beat two Swiss skiers in Saturday's downhill, and this time the 26-year-old held off two Austrians, as Goergl and Nicole Hosp finished in second and third place respectively.

"I was a little bit more cautious on the top part of the course, but as soon as I got on the flats then I really tried to push the limits and go faster," Vonn said. "I was happy with my slalom, I think it was a solid run."

Vonn is cautious about looking too far ahead, but is determined to improve on her 11 World Cup race wins last season.

"Try and do a little better than that," she said.

Swiss great Vreni Schneider established the all-time record of 14 victories in 1988-89.

Another Austrian, Anna

Fenninger, finished fourth on Sunday, and Riesch was fifth — finally showing some form after a dismal 24th place in Saturday's downhill.

Vonn was seventh fastest in slalom in 49.14 seconds to give her an overall time of 2 minutes, 7.80 seconds, putting her 0.46 clear of Goergl and 0.69 ahead of Hosp.

"I had a great slalom, I was happy with the super-G, too, because I hadn't (done a) super-G for a long time," Goergl said. "So it was a good test."

It was Goergl's first World Cup podium since her third place in downhill at Lake Louise in March.

"I like Val d'Isere, I like the hill. It's pretty flat, I like flat (because) it makes it easier for me in slalom," she said. "The course was not really difficult so it was really easy to attack." Hosp returned to the podium for the first time since a third-place finish in slalom at Osterschwang, Germany, in March, 2009.

"I'm really happy about the podium, because it's a long time ago for me," Hosp said. □

## Ligety wins third straight World Cup giant slalom

GRAHAM DUNBAR  
AP Sports Writer

ALTA BADIA, Italy (AP) — Ted Ligety extended his domination in World Cup giant slaloms Sunday, winning his third straight race to take the lead in the overall standings. The American was second after the opening run behind Cyprien Richard, but the Frenchman lost time on the lower part of his afternoon run down the steep and icy Gran Risa course.

"I'm so happy," Ligety said. "I knew I could make it up on a hill like this. I definitely had a lot of confidence after winning the last two races by large amounts."

Ligety's eighth career World Cup victory, all in his specialist event, was his first win at Alta Badia.

"It was always my dream to win here on such a classic course," he said.

Ligety finished in a combined time of 2 minutes, 31.99 seconds. Richard was 0.14 seconds back and countryman Thomas Fanara was 0.55 behind in third, with both Frenchman posting career-best finishes.

"Ted is a big champion," Richard said. "The second run was my fault. I missed my concentration to make this mistake."

Ligety has won all three completed GS races this season with victories at Beaver Creek, Colo., and Val d'Isere, France.

"(Ted) is amazing right now," said U.S. teammate Bode Miller, who finished 2.86 seconds back in 15th. "GS

is amazing to watch when someone is skiing like that."

Miller joined a throng of United States skiers and staff in the finish area cheering on Ligety to stretch his winning streak. It was a good day for American skiers, with Lindsey Vonn winning a super-combined in Val d'Isere, to take the women's overall lead. Ligety leads the men's overall standings with 321 points. Silvan Zurbriggen of Switzerland is six points behind after failing to qualify for the second run.

Ligety has a maximum 300 points from giant slaloms, and has a 135-point lead in the discipline standings over Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway.

Svindal placed third in the first leg, but never threatened



Ted Ligety of the United States smiles after winning an alpine ski men's World Cup giant slalom race, in Alta Badia, Italy, Sunday, Dec. 19, 2010.

*Associated Press*

in the afternoon and finished sixth, 1.32 off Ligety's pace. Didier Cuche of Switzerland finished fourth, and climbed into a tie for third place in the overall standings with Austria's Michael Walchhofer. A strong Italian team had a disappointing day on its classic home giant slalom course that marked its 25th year on the World Cup calendar.

Davide Simoncelli, the

runner-up here last year, was best in 10th place — two seconds behind Ligety.

He was proud to join the Alta Badia winners' roll that started with Swedish legend Ingemar Stenmark and includes Italian great Alberto Tomba four times, plus Miller in 2002.

"This is the premier GS hill on the World Cup tour without a doubt," Ligety said. "It's cool to be on that list." □



# US seeks legal pursuit of 'hi-tech terrorist' Assange: Biden

WASHINGTON – US vice president Joe Biden on Sunday blasted Julian Assange as a dangerous “hi-tech terrorist” and said Washington was exploring a legal pursuit of the WikiLeaks founder.

Biden made the comments as Assange spent his third full day under “mansion arrest” at a friend’s house in eastern England while he fights extradition to Sweden, where he is wanted for questioning over allegations of sex crimes. The Australian has enraged the United States by obtaining a cache of some 250,000 US diplomatic cables and slowly releasing the documents through his whistleblowing website, often causing huge embarrassment in Washington. Assange voiced fears last week that the US would try to extradite him on charges related to the leaked cables, and Biden said the US Justice Department was examining how to take legal action against Assange.

“We’re looking at that right now,” the vice president told NBC’s Sunday talk show “Meet the Press”, without elaborating on just how the

administration could act against the WikiLeaks chief.

“I’m not going to comment on that process.”

When asked whether he thought Assange was a hi-tech terrorist or a whistleblower akin to those who released the Pentagon Papers a series of top-secret documents revealing US military policy in Vietnam Biden said: “I would argue that it’s closer to being hi-tech terrorist.”

As he savoured his first day of freedom Friday after a British court released him on bail, Assange said his lawyers believed a secret US grand jury investigation had been started into his role in the diplomatic cable leak.

Media reports suggest that US prosecutors are trying to build a case against him on the grounds that he encouraged a US soldier, Bradley Manning, to steal US cables from a government computer and pass them to WikiLeaks.

Assange has denied knowing Manning.

A report by congressional researchers said the Espionage Act and other US laws could be used to prosecute Assange, but

there is no known precedent for prosecuting publishers in such a case.

Assange is staying at Ellingham Hall, the mansion in eastern England of journalist friend Vaughan Smith, as part of the conditions of bail, which he was granted by London’s High Court on Thursday.

He must also report daily to a nearby police station and wear an electronic tag.

On Saturday, WikiLeaks was dealt another blow when Bank of America, the largest US bank, became the latest institution to halt financial transactions for the site after MasterCard, PayPal, Visa Europe and others.

The bank said its decision was “based upon our reasonable belief that WikiLeaks may be engaged in activities that are, among other things, inconsistent with our internal policies for processing payments.”

But Assange lashed out at the move, telling AFP it was a “new type of business McCarthyism in the US.”

The term was coined to describe the anti-communist pursuits of former US senator



Joseph McCarthy from the late 1940s to the 1950s.

New information about the allegations Assange faces in Sweden also emerged at the weekend.

Several British newspapers published lurid new details of the claims of sexual assault against two women, over which Swedish prosecutors want to question him. The 39-year-old denies the charges.

The Guardian newspaper which has cooperated with WikiLeaks on the publication of the US documents and the Mail on Sunday both reported that the two women with whom he had sex in Sweden

had gone to police after he refused to take an HIV test.

Assange hit out at Swedish handling of the case, accusing authorities there of leaking fresh details about the case that even he and his defence lawyers have not had access to.

The former computer hacker also reiterated that there were threats against his life and those of the website’s staff, but he vowed that WikiLeaks would continue publishing the cables.

“We are a robust organisation. During my time in solitary confinement we continued to publish every day and it’s not going to change,” he said. □

## Smart phone rivalry plays out in patent suits



SEATTLE – Competition among smart phone makers is heating up at retail, in advertising and, increasingly, in the courtroom as handset and software makers wield patent lawsuits to protect their turf and slow down their rivals.

Just a few years ago, smart phones were mainly for office workers who needed to check e-mail after hours. For most people, the Web browsers

and other programs were too much trouble, and the data connections too slow.

Apple Inc. changed all that with the introduction of the iPhone in 2007. Its touch-sensitive screen and big icons made it easy to use. Its programs were designed from the ground up to work well on the small screen. And the sleek design made it an instant hit with consumers.

Even as competitors have

rushed out copycat designs, the iPhone still sets the agenda.

But that throne is weakening. And as the other devices, including those running Google Inc.’s Android system, catch up with the iPhone, smart phone makers are having a harder time standing out to consumers or persuading them to pay more for their devices. In turn, that has prompted a slew of patent

disputes over all aspects of basic phone use, from the way a user swipes a touch screen to perform an action to the method a phone uses to extend battery life. Nokia is suing Apple, Apple is suing HTC, Microsoft is suing Motorola and more.

“In consumer electronics and related fields, it’s a great challenge to earn a profit,” said Bruce Sunstein, an intellectual property lawyer at Sunstein Kann Murphy & Timbers in Boston. “The way you can usually get profit is through innovation.”

Smart phone makers must not only come up with novel features, he said, but must also stake claims to the technology behind them and thus reap the rewards in licensing fees.

Consumers shouldn’t worry about buying or using any of those phones. Patent cases can take months or years to

resolve sometimes longer than the life of these phones and disputes are often settled with licensing deals.

Ultimately, no one company will prevail. Rather, the results will determine how profits are divvied up among a vast number of players.

It’s a pool of money that’s growing as smart phone sales balloon. Research group IDC expects global smart phone shipments of 270 million in 2010, a 55 percent increase from last year.

Intellectual property lawsuits can also help distract a rival or make entering the market less attractive. Amid fierce competition, companies are suing first rather than approaching rivals about licensing deals, said Ronald Cahill, manager of the intellectual property department at Nutter McClennen & Fish in Boston. □





## Prince calls celebs on stage to party at NYC show

NEW YORK — Sherri Sheppard finally got her wish to spend the night with Prince but she had to share him with a few other celebrities, including Spike Lee, Naomi Campbell, Jamie Foxx and her “View” co-host Whoopi Goldberg. Prince called Sheppard and a host of other stars on stage Saturday night in his sold-out concert at Madison Square Garden. Lee played the tambourine as Alicia Keys, Jamie Foxx, Professor Cornel West, talk-show host Tavis Smiley and others danced onstage with Prince and Sheila E. to the hit “A Love Bizarre.”

Prince recently made a surprise appearance on “The View” that left Sheppard swooning.

Prince pretended to bolt from the stage when he mentioned Sheppard’s name, but then slyly told her: “Come on, Sherri. Dance with me, please. I wanna see what you really do.”

The concert was part of Prince’s “Welcome 2 America” performances in the New York City area; this was his first night at the famed Garden.

Although Prince released a new album overseas this year, Saturday’s concert was classic Prince. He sang memorable tunes like “Kiss,” “1999,” “Let’s Go Crazy” and “Purple Rain” the only thing missing from the old days were the heels he used to wear. (He strutted and danced on stage in more sensible flats.) □

# After Australia tour, Winfrey vacations in Fiji

SUVA, Fiji — Fresh off an Australian tour with her frenzied talk-show fans, Oprah Winfrey is taking a respite in the South Pacific island nation of Fiji, where the military regime wished her “a great time.”

Fiji’s tourism minister said Winfrey was spending the Christmas holiday there and that officials wanted to respect her privacy. Local media reported she arrived Thursday and that she and longtime beau Stedman Graham were to stay until Dec. 26.

“We know she is here for a holiday and respect that, and the government obviously wants Winfrey to have a great time,” Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, the tourism minister, said Saturday.

Tourism on Fiji is active, though relations with other countries have been strained by the lack of democracy since a December 2006 military coup. Australia and New Zealand imposed travel bans on Fiji leaders, and international trade sanctions have been imposed, but elections have only been pushed back.

The U.S. State Department has warned Americans to carefully consider the risks of travel to Fiji and to be vigilant while there. During a visit to Australia last month, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton called for democracy to be restored in Fiji and for political freedoms to advance.

The islands have been a frequent celebrity destination in the past. Rolling Stone Keith Richards famously fell from a tree at the exclusive Wakaya Club in 2006 and was rushed to New Zealand for brain surgery.

The country is serious about maintaining its image as a destination for stars who want to get away from it all in a hidden paradise, said Sayed-Khaiyum, Fiji’s top tourism official and its attorney general.

“Fiji is one of those destinations where we like people to come and have their own private time, and we’re here to ensure that



happens,” he said. “We don’t want Fiji to become a playground for the paparazzi.”

Winfrey launched the 25th and final season of “The Oprah Winfrey Show” by surprising her audience with an eight-day trip to Australia. The lucky chosen fans snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef, surfed at Bondi Beach and explored the rugged Outback before Tuesday’s grand send-off: two star-studded shows taped on the steps of the Sydney Opera House.

Winfrey lavished praise on her Australian hosts, the scenery and the citizens, and countered criticism about the government footing the \$5 million bill by saying the publicity will reap millions more.

“It is immeasurable what four hours of a love festival about your country broadcast in 145 countries around the world can do,” Winfrey told reporters.

Her representatives in Chicago did not return calls for comment this weekend. □



## Snow cancels Lady Gaga concert in Paris

PARIS — Lady Gaga isn’t having much luck in Paris.

In October, the pop diva’s concerts in Paris were postponed amid nationwide strikes over a government plan to raise the retirement age. One show was rescheduled for Sunday, but it was called off because of snow.

The weather led authorities to ban big trucks from driving through the Ile de France region that includes Paris.

Lady Gaga’s trucks couldn’t get to the venue on time, concert venue Bercy stadium said on

its Web site.

A concert Monday is expected to go forward as planned, and the canceled show is likely to be rescheduled for Tuesday, Bercy said.

The diva vented on Twitter, writing that “all 28” of the trucks carrying sets for her elaborate show had been detained. She said had wanted to do a show without the sets, but even sound and power equipment was blocked.

“I am furious and devastated,” she wrote, adding that it was “unfair to my fans and to me.” □

## “Tron” leads weak pack of newcomers at box office

LOS ANGELES — “Tron: Legacy,” a costly 3D sci-fi movie that Walt Disney Co has promoted for more than three years, opened disappointingly at the weekend box office in North America, while a new comedy starring Reese Witherspoon was one of the biggest flops of the year.

The “Tron” movie, a massively hyped sequel to an obscure 1982 movie, earned \$43.6 million during its first three days of release, Disney said Sunday. Industry observers had been expecting a three-day start in the \$50 million range, although Disney said the opening was within its own expectations.

The effects-laden update reportedly cost \$170 million to make, and more than \$100 million to market worldwide. Disney never divulges budgets.

Internationally, the film earned a modest \$23 million from No. 1 openings in

all 26 of its markets, including Japan, Australia, Britain and Brazil. These markets represent about half of the international sales pie.

Meanwhile “How Do You Know” opened at No. 8 with just \$7.6 million in the United States and Canada, far short of modest expectations in the \$12 million range.

The Columbia Pictures project cost about \$100 million to make, with half the budget spent on salaries for Witherspoon, co-stars Jack Nicholson, Owen Wilson and Paul Rudd, and writer/director James L. Brooks. Extensive reshoots also drove up costs.

Executives at the Sony Corp unit were despondent about the opening, although the film had suffered bad buzz for some time with no help from a forgettable title. □







## Italy's Padoa Schioppa, architect of euro, dies

ROME – Italian economist Tommaso Padoa Schioppa, one of the intellectual architects of the euro and a member of the European Central Bank's first executive board, has died. He was 70. Padoa Schioppa, economy minister under Premier Romano Prodi, died Saturday night after suffering a heart attack during a dinner in Rome with friends, according to one of those present, his one-time deputy Vincenzo Visco.

The unexpected death stunned Italy's political and business elite, who remembered him as a passionate promoter of the European project and its single currency.

"He was among those who knew how to translate the European ideal into concrete and learned analyses and projects, giving in particular a lasting contribution to the birth of the euro and the eurozone," Italian President Giorgio Napolitano said.

During his seven year term at the ECB, Padoa Schioppa was one of the six members charged with guiding the euro through its first vital years after being introduced in 11 member nations on Jan. 1, 1999.

"He contributed decisively in the early years of the euro to

the reputation of the ECB as a major actor in international and European cooperation," ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet said in a statement. The eurozone, he said, "is losing a man of reflection, of action and of vision, fully dedicated to European unity." Prior his appointment to the ECB, Padoa Schioppa held many prestigious posts in the Italian business and banking world. He first gained international recognition as the director-general for economic and financial affairs at the European Commission 1979-1983. In 1993 he became deputy director-general of Banca d'Italia. He surprised many in 1997 when he moved to Consob, Italy's stock market watchdog. As chairman he fought to introduce reforms

in the Italian stock market particularly those to clamp down on insider trading.

More recently, the Greek government tapped him to help deal with the country's debt crisis and Fiat Industrial named him to the board just last week. But it was his role in shepherding in the euro that made his mark.

Schioppa was the executive board director with special responsibility for international relations, payment systems and banking supervision. He traveled widely lecturing in important financial centers from New York to Tokyo and Beijing advocating the importance and potential of the euro.

An ardent supporter of the European project, the trilingual Schioppa acknowledged the

challenge that lack of political union presented to the euro. He repeatedly argued that "a strong currency requires a strong economy and a strong polity, not only a competent central bank." With the euro well on its way, Prodi named Padoa Schioppa economy minister after winning the 2006 elections and tasked him with the difficult job of trying to revive Italy's zero-growth economy. It was a post he held until Prodi lost to Premier Silvio Berlusconi in 2008. Padoa Schioppa, educated in Milan and Massachusetts, was married with three children. Funeral arrangements weren't immediately announced. Rome's mayor offered city hall for the wake, noting that Padoa Schioppa's death was a loss for the entire nation. □

## Online holidayspending up 12 percent

NEW YORK – U.S. online sales are up 12 percent to \$27.5 billion so far this holiday shopping season compared with a year ago, according to research firm comScore.

In the November 1 through December 17 period, four individual days surpassed \$900 million, led by "Green Monday" on December 13 with \$954 million and "Free Shipping Day," December 17, with \$942 million, according to comScore.

"Free Shipping Day punctuated an exceptional week in which consumers spent more than

\$5.5 billion online, representing a 14 percent increase from last year," said comScore Chairman Gian Fulgoni in a statement.

"We have likely already witnessed the peak spending day of the year, which means that Cyber Monday should emerge as the season's heaviest online spending day for the first time in history," Fulgoni said.

The research firm said that computer hardware including Apple Inc's iPad and laptop computers drove most of the growth. □



## Shoppers crowd the malls in Christmas countdown

NEW YORK – Shoppers came out in droves on the last weekend before Christmas, tackling their gift lists and driving traffic up at malls across the country.

Weather caused no major problems a week after an intense snowstorm blanketed the Midwest and caused many malls to close early. Discounts, though not as steep as last year, were rampant, and shoppers responded to them.

At the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., the nation's largest mall, Public Relations Director Dan Jasper

said a big snowstorm the weekend before that closed the mall early had shoppers packing the mall to catch up. Preliminary reports showed 200,000 came to the mall Saturday, making it one of its busiest days ever and the busiest day so far this year.

"People are a little panicked. I'm hearing them say 'We've gotta get this done,' and that doesn't usually show up until the 22nd or the 23rd."

It wasn't the only mall that saw packed stores and parking lots. Greg Maloney, CEO of the retail practice of Jones

Lang LaSalle, which operates about 90 malls across the country, said traffic was up 10 percent to 12 percent across the country over the same weekend last year.

Karen MacDonald, a spokeswoman for Taubman Centers Inc., which owns or manages 26 shopping centers, said many stores were reporting higher traffic.

Most shoppers still had about half their Christmas shopping left heading into the weekend, according to the National Retail Federation trade group. □

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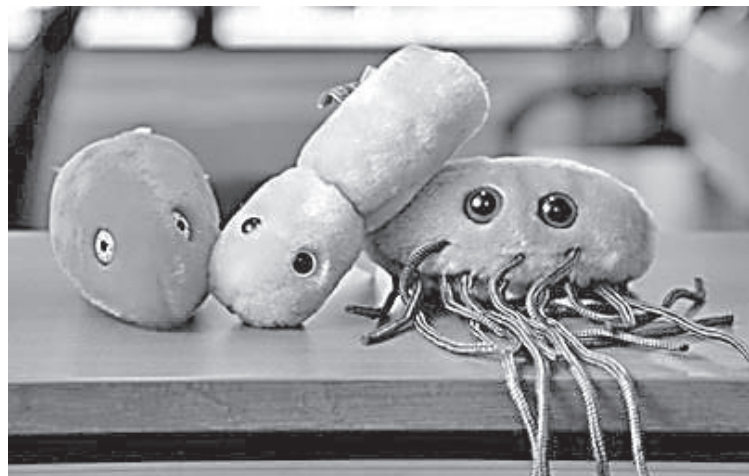
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# HEALTH

## Aruba TODAY

### Conn. company's stuffed germ toys catching on



STAMFORD, Conn. — Jim Henson's Muppets made pigs and frogs endearing, and Walt Disney turned a common rodent into a cultural icon.

Now, Drew Oliver thinks it's time for bacteria, viruses and other maligned microorganisms to share the love.

Instead of standard Christmas gifts, a growing number of people are looking under the tree for giant stuffed cold germs, cuddly *E. coli*, hugworthy heartworm and other oddities from Oliver's Stamford-based company, Giant Microbes. Oliver says the toys are true to the microbes they represent except, of course, for their eyes and enhanced colors.

Once popular mostly as "geek chic" among medical workers and niche groups, the stuffed microbe toys have spawned Facebook fan sites and a subculture of collectors who eagerly await each new release.

They pounced on this fall's newcomers including measles, rubella and the oh-so-popular diarrhea and posted pictures on their Facebook pages of their new mini-microbe Christmas tree ornaments.

Being a purveyor of pretend pestilence might seem an odd career turn for Oliver, 40, who was a Chicago corporate attorney when he incorporated Giant Microbes in 2001.

As a father of four, he thought

stuffed versions of microbes that cause sore throats, the flu and other common ailments could help children understand the illnesses and avoid some of them with good hygiene.

Sales launched in 2002, but business took a few years to pick up and, even then, largely in niche markets such as museum shops and college bookstores. But in the last few years, the stuffed germs have spread like the common cold microbe that remains its flagship and biggest seller.

"All four of my kids are really into science, and my two oldest girls thought they were the coolest thing ever," said Joslyn Gray, a Giant Microbes fan who lives near Houston. "There's just so much crap out there for kids these days. To find something that's clever and smart and still fun is really great."

Gray discovered Giant Microbes after writing on her blog, <http://www.starkravingmادمommy.com>, about her 4-year-old son's germ anxiety after preschool lessons on hygiene. She was flooded with suggestions from readers to introduce him to the cuddly versions of the germs he feared so much.

"Having them brought something lighthearted to the subject and this was after weeks of him wiping down everything he encountered with anti-viral tissues to the point where it was really affecting his life," Gray said.

In recent years, the Giant Microbes line has gone beyond the common microbes to exotic ones such as malaria and sleeping sickness, tiny critters such as dust mites and bed bugs, and water dwellers like copepods and algae.

Some American Red Cross divisions use the stuffed red blood cell in school presentations, and the Education Centre Library serving Ontario's Canadore College and Nipissing University has dozens of Giant Microbes in its lending inventory.

Some students take them to classrooms during their student teaching stints. Others use them as biology study tools.

"You should see the excitement when the new microbes arrive," said Charlotte Innerd, the library's reference and information services manager. "We'll be processing them in

the back room and everyone's asking, 'Which ones came in?'"

Oliver will not disclose sales figures for the privately held company, but its success allowed him to leave his attorney job, move back to his hometown of Greenwich and run the business full time. It now has headquarters in Stamford, along with a United Kingdom office and distribution partners worldwide.

The microbes, which Oliver describes as whimsy rooted firmly in science, harken to his college days as an editor at the offbeat Harvard Lampoon humor magazine.

The toys depict each microbe at a million times its actual size or larger, and each comes with an often breezy but informative information card about their origins and avoiding illnesses they spread. Each has eyes to give them a

"face," so to speak. Some also have special features: tiny knife and fork embroidered on the chest of the flesh-eating disease's microbe, for example, and a black cape on the MRSA bacterium known colloquially as the "superbug" for its resistance to certain antibiotics.

"From the beginning they were designed to be whimsical, of course, with the eyes and features like that, but also scientifically sound to the extent that a plush doll of a germ can be," Oliver said.

Another category that sells well: the microbes carrying sexually transmitted diseases, often popular as joke gifts for Valentine's Day or on college campuses. Needless to say, Oliver adds, those aren't marketed to children.

"The idea is never to make fun of these issues or people who are contending with them," he said. □

### Keeping Holiday Drinking in Check May Counter Cancer

Though holiday partying often includes alcohol consumption, cancer experts are urging partiers to partake moderately.

"Research shows that drinking even a small amount of alcohol increases your chances of developing cancer, including oral cancer, breast cancer and liver cancer," Clare McKindley, clinical dietitian in the Cancer Prevention Center at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, said in a news release from the center.

"Researchers are still trying to learn more about how alcohol links to cancer," she added. "But convincing evidence does support the fact that heavy drinking damages cells and increases the risk for cancer development."

To reduce risk, experts say, drinkers can do a number of things. First, stick to the recommended serving size. A



drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor.

Women should have no more than one drink a day and men should have no more than two drinks a day, according to the U.S. National Cancer Institute.

Try to avoid high-calorie drinks. Many popular alcoholic drinks are loaded with calories, especially those mixed with soda, fruit juice or cream. A one-cup serving of eggnog, a holiday staple,

has about 340 calories. Being overweight or obese is also associated with an increased risk for cancer.

Researchers believe that it is the ethanol or alcohol in beer, wine and liquor that increases cancer risk. Check the ethanol percentage numbers on bottle labels and stay away from 100-proof liquor.

Also try non-alcoholic drinks. For example, for a "cocktail-like" beverage, try club soda and lime, McKindley suggested. □



## For Most, Chronic Heartburn Not a Big Risk for Esophageal Cancer

Contrary to popular belief, acid reflux disease, better known as heartburn, is not much of a risk factor for esophageal cancer for most people, according to new research.

"It's a rare cancer," said study author Dr. Joel H. Rubenstein, an assistant professor in the University of Michigan department of internal medicine.

"About 1 in 4 people have symptoms of GERD [acid reflux disease] and that's a lot of people," he said. "But 25 percent of people aren't going to get this cancer. No way."

GERD is characterized by the frequent rise of stomach acid into the esophagus.

Rubenstein said he was concerned that as medical technology advances, enthusiasm for screening for esophageal cancer will increase, though there is no evidence that widespread screening has a benefit. About 8,000 cases of esophageal cancer are diagnosed in the United States each year, he said.

The study was published this month in the American Journal of Gastroenterology.

Using computer models based on data from a national cancer registry and other published research about acid reflux disease, the study found only 5,920 cases of esophageal cancer among whites younger than 80 years old, with or without acid reflux disease, in the U.S. population in 2005.

However, white men over 60 years old with regular acid reflux symptoms accounted for 36 percent of these cases. Women accounted for only 12 percent of the cases, regardless of age and whether or not they had acid reflux disease. □

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# Rich Women Prefer Attractive Older Men



Some have already dubbed it the George Clooney Effect: Psychologists in Scotland have found that as women become more financially independent, they want an older, more attractive male partner. Studies have previously found that women place greater emphasis on whether a man can provide for them, while men place more importance on good looks. The new study revealed that as women earn more and become more independent, their tastes actually change. The finding suggests that greater financial independence gives women greater confidence in choosing their partner. Instinctive preferences for material stability and security

become less important, physical attractiveness becomes more important, and the age of a woman's partner also increases. "Previous research shows that men place greater importance on physical attractiveness when picking a partner, whereas women focus much more on whether someone can provide material resources," said lead researcher Dr. Fhionna Moore. "We'd assumed that as women earn more, their partner preferences would actually become more like those of men, with a tendency towards preferring younger, more attractive partners rather than those who can provide and care for children.

Moore added, "However, the preferred age difference did not change as we'd expected - more financially independent women actually preferred even older men. We think this suggests greater financial independence gives women more confidence in partner choices, and attracts them to powerful, attractive older men."

The study was conducted online with 3,770 heterosexual participants, about equal numbers of men and woman, who were asked questions about their background and personal situation, and their level of financial independence. Participants ranked a series of criteria such as physical attraction, financial prospects and sense of humor in order of importance, with these results matched against their income and financial independence. "The behavior of men and women does become more similar as women earn more, but only in terms of the importance of physical attraction," Moore added. "But the similarities stop there: Greater income makes women prefer even older men, and men prefer even younger women." The popular stereotype of powerful women adopting male patterns of behavior is strongly questioned by these new results. The research is published in the latest online issue of the journal *Evolutionary Psychology*. □



## Celebrate the Winter Solstice with a Total Lunar Eclipse and Ursid Meteor Shower

Attention parents: Tuesday, Dec. 21, will showcase an event you and the family won't want to miss. No need to purchase expensive tickets. This event is coming to a galaxy near you. Keep the kids up late for winter solstice plus a total lunar eclipse and meteor shower. That's right folks, it's a TKO of the sun with a meteor shower to light the way. Kids, mom and dad have no excuse not to let you stay up for this stellar event because most of you are on Christmas vacation; no school night issues to worry about. It's not a common event that a total lunar eclipse coincides with Winter Solstice. The last time this happened, 372 years ago, Anne Hutchinson was being ousted from the Massachusetts Bay Colony for reading the Bible with other women, the Shogun was trouncing rebels and the Sultan was strangling Cyril

of Constantinople. For our winter solstice, Ursid meteor shower and total lunar eclipse event, we will have front row seats. Enjoy this once in a quatercentenary (400-year) event. Getting the Ursid meteor shower, named Ursid because it emanates from the star Kochab in Ursa Minor, the Little Bear, is a special bonus. The Dec. 22 to 23 Ursid meteor shower is usually difficult to see because of the full moon around that time of month. The total lunar eclipse does double duty as is not only blots out the moonlight and makes the Ursids visible, an eclipse is pretty amazing to watch, too. A total lunar eclipse can be viewed safely with the naked eye, also. Unlike a solar eclipse which must be viewed with a pinhole camera or with special glasses, moonlight is not strong enough to harm the eyes.

When is the best time to view the winter solstice, total lunar eclipse and Ursid meteor shower? According to Space.com, it depends upon where you live. West Coast viewers will want to start watching about 9:30 p.m. while viewers on the East Coast will see the total lunar eclipse best at 12:30 a.m. (just after midnight). The eclipse will reach full strength at 12:17 p.m. out west and 3:17 a.m. in the east. Across the country, the time zones add an hour as they move east. Live Science says that "across the country, the eclipse will be visible until the moon sets in the west and the sun rises." □

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# Ex presidente Toledo y ex alcalde lideran intención voto en Perú

LIMA (Reuters) - El ex presidente peruano Alejandro Toledo igualó en el primer lugar de las preferencias electorales al favorito ex alcalde de Lima, Luis Castañeda, restando cuatro meses para los comicios presidenciales en el país andino, mostró el domingo una encuesta. Toledo y Castañeda lideraban las intenciones de voto con 23 por ciento, de acuerdo a la encuesta realizada por Ipsos Apoyo a nivel nacional urbano y publicada por el diario El Comercio.

Con respecto al sondeo realizado en noviembre, Toledo subió tres puntos porcentuales, mientras que Castañeda bajó uno.

En los últimos meses Toledo ha venido escalando en las preferencias electorales, tras salir a la escena política en noviembre para destacar su experiencia de haber gobernado al país andino entre 2001 y el 2006. "Como se trata de una encuesta

nacional urbana y se sabe que el ex alcalde de Lima cuenta con menos respaldo en el ámbito rural que sus contendores, se puede inferir que hoy, Toledo lidera la intención de voto en el país", dijo el director de Ipsos Apoyo, Alfredo Torres.

Castañeda tiene como bastión electoral a Lima, que congrega la mayor plaza electoral del país, pero no capitaliza tanto arraigo en otros sectores de la nación sudamericana, en los que Fujimori y Toledo son más populares. "Castañeda y Keiko Fujimori, quien también tiene apoyo rural, se disputarían el segundo lugar", agregó. Según el sondeo, la legisladora conservadora Keiko Fujimori, cuyo padre fue condenado a 25 años de prisión por abusos a los derechos humanos cometidos durante su Gobierno, se ubica en el segundo lugar de las preferencias, con un 20 por ciento, igual nivel que el sondeo previo. □



El ex presidente peruano Alejandro Toledo igualó en el primer lugar de las preferencias electorales al favorito ex alcalde de Lima, Luis Castañeda, restando cuatro meses para los comicios presidenciales en el país andino, mostró el domingo una encuesta. REUTERS/ Enrique Castro-Mendivil

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